232 a 2

ADVICE

FROM A

LADY OF QUALITY

TO HER

CHILDREN,

IN THE LAST STAGE OF A

LINGERING ILLNESS,

IN A SERIES OF

EVENING-CONFERENCES

ON THE MOST

INTERESTING SUBJECTS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

VOL. I.

GLOCESTER:
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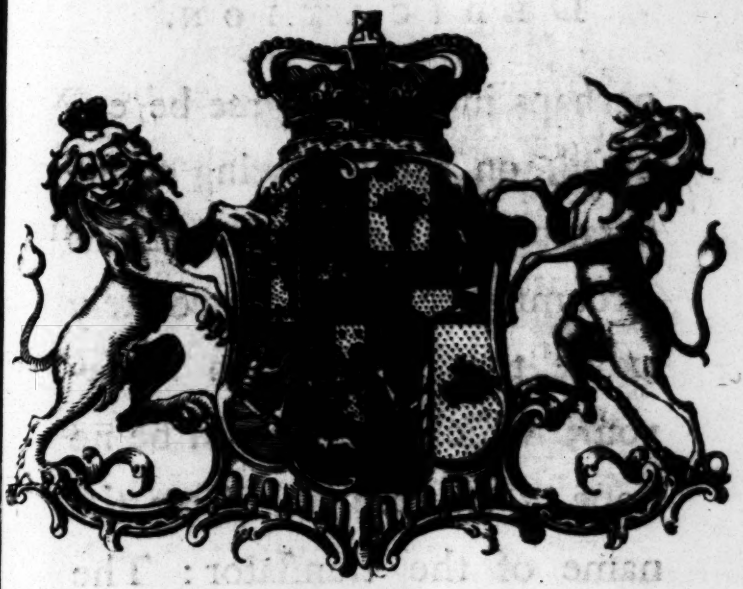
M.DCC.LXXVIII.

BRIT. MUS.



TO THE

QUEEN.

May it pleaſe your MAJESTY,

THE ambitious deſire of ſeeing your MAJESTY's name prefixed to this little work may

 perhaps

perhaps in ſome degree be excuſed, on the following conſiderations: The firſt is, that this circumſtance will immediately excite that prejudice in its favour, which there could be no hope of its receiving from the name of the tranſlator: The other is, that, appearing under the patronage of your MAJESTY, its power of doing good will be conſiderably enlarged.

WHATEVER influence vanity may have on the former of theſe motives,

motives, the latter cannot, I hope, be blamed: and if theſe pages ſhould appear calculated to inculcate the principles, or to encourage the practice, of virtue, no other argument, I am confident, need be urged to induce your Majeſty to ſuffer them to come forth under the ſanction of your illuſtrious auſpices.

A lady of high rank, inſtructing her children in virtue and religion, and forming their tender minds to whatſoever may

render them wiſe and good, ſeems, for very obvious reaſons, particularly entitled to your MAJESTY's gracious attention. But tho' the reſemblance betwixt your MAJESTY, and the principal character before you, ſo far as her parental ſolicitude extends, is too ſtriking to eſcape our notice, yet do we thankfully reflect, that in one reſpect a very eſſential difference may be obſerved: this lady, MADAM, employed only the uncertain intervals of ſickneſs, and the anxious moments

moments of an expiring life, in the diſcharge of that important duty, which is well known to engage your MAJESTY's beſt hours of youth, and health, and vigour.

MAY your MAJESTY happily perſevere in ſo good a work! to the edification of your amiable offspring in every princely virtue—to the great delight of your loyal and affectionate ſubjects—to the furtherance of their Royal Highneſſes' preſent and future happineſs—and, a-

bove all, to the glory and praiſe of GOD!

SUCH is the prayer of thouſands; and among the reſt, of one, who preſumes to ſubſcribe himſelf, with all imaginable duty and reſpect,

MADAM,

Your MAJESTY's

Moſt devoted,

Moſt obedient, and

Moſt humble Servant,

GREENFORD, Nov. 16, 1778. SAMUEL GLASSE.

ADVERTISEMENT.

WE here preſent you with the pure effuſions of parental tenderneſs; as filial affection preſerved them from being loſt, ſo a deſire to promote the benefit of mankind has induced me to make them public.

THIS excellent lady having herſelf given us the hiſtory of her life in her firſt diſcourſe, we ſhall only add, that ſhe had every advantage of perſon and underſtanding; and that nothing can be more affecting, than that diſplay of female delicacy and manly ſenſe, which appears in theſe conferences with her children.

WE here ſee a mother, elevated as it were above herſelf, and inſenſible of the miſeries of ſickneſs, and the horrors of the grave, while ſhe is inculcating in

the minds of her children the duties which they owe to God, to their country, and to ſociety: her diſcourſe is chiefly directed to thoſe of her two ſons, who had engaged in a military life; but in one of theſe conferences, ſhe addreſſes herſelf particularly to her third, who had dedicated himſelf to the church: another is confined to the inſtruction of her daughter; in all of them, her admonitions are inforced with tears, and interrupted by ſighs; they are the natural dictates of the tendereſt affection, which no bodily infirmities could prevail with her to ſuppreſs. If the reader finds not in this work thoſe epiſodes, or that variety which diſtinguiſhes a romance, it is only becauſe truth wants none of theſe embelliſhments: ſhe needs only to be ſeen, to command our attention and our admiration: the voice of nature is heard throughout the work, and the eloquence here diſplayed is the forcible language of the heart.

THE evening being made choice of as the propereſt ſeaſon for inſtruction, we have divided the work into *Evening Conferences:* the whole was faithfully collected by the induſtry of an *Amanuenſis*, ſo placed, as to be an ear-witneſs of all that paſſed: had not this care been taken, the world would have been deprived of an invaluable ſyſtem of education, which no one can read with inattention, and few without improvement.

THE reader will at once perceive, that tho' the expreſſions of our admirable inſtructreſs are diveſted of ornament and art, ſhe was a perſon of ſuperior abilities, and of great knowledge.

IT were a tribute juſtly due to the memory of ſuch a lady, to tranſmit her name with all the reſpect which is due to it, to poſterity: but as her humility induced her to wiſh ſhe might not be recorded after her death, we think our-

ſelves obliged to do violence to our inclinations, in compliance with her laſt requeſt.

Nor are we at all apprehenſive that this concealment will impeach the authenticity of the work: it is conceived in ſuch terms, as to convince any judicious reader, that ſuch ſentiments could only be founded in nature. Here are no brilliant conceits, no affected phraſes, but the artleſs expreſſions of maternal affection: he who does not yield to the force of ſuch evidence as this, muſt be conſidered as one, who cannot diſtinguiſh what is really the language of nature, or as one, who never yet experienced the power of ſentimental affection.

Probability does not always go hand in hand with truth; but they are happily united in this work. What indeed can be conceived more natural, than that a tender mother, anxious for her children's

children's welfare, ſhould take advantage of her gradually declining health to ſet before them the vanities of the world, and to give them the beſt directions for the regulation of their conduct? let any man enter ſeriouſly into himſelf; let him liſten to the language of his own heart; and he will ſoon find, that thoſe noble ſentiments, which occur in the following pages, could never have been the offspring of imagination. The life of this incomparable mother was but too ſhort, as it did not exceed thirty nine years; but ſhe will yet live in theſe her genuine conferences, which, we doubt not, will be watered with the reader's tears.

THE

TRANSLATOR's PREFACE

TO THE

READER.

IN one of Pope Ganganelli's *letters, the following work is honourably mentioned, as being a* complete treatiſe on education. *From the moment of my ſeeing it thus ſpoken of, I determined to examine its pretenſions to ſo favourable a character. The pains it has coſt me to render it of general uſe to my countrymen, may be conſidered as the beſt proof of my opinion in this reſpect.*

I can truly ſay, I have read the book with inexpreſſible delight: the involuntary tear hath more than once been witneſs to my approbation of that tenderneſs of affection with which it abounds; and the hours which

which I have moſt agreeably, and I truſt not unprofitably, paſſed in the ſociety of this incomparable lady, have made me ample amends for the trouble I have taken, in endeavouring to do juſtice to the dignity of her ſentiments, the warmth of her affection, and the elegant ſimplicity and manly force of her expreſſions.

For myſelf, I claim no more merit from the following tranſlation, than that which is due to a good intention: it is poſſible, that many may profit by theſe excellent inſtructions, who are unacquainted with the language in which they were written; and ſome even of thoſe, who are acquainted with it, may yet read them with greater eaſe and benefit in their own tongue.

A cloſe compariſon with the original I foreſee may be unfavourable to my reputation as a tranſlator; but it cannot injure it, as an honeſt man; for, without adhering with too ſervile an attachment to my author, I have endeavoured to expreſs the ſentiments

timents before me as exactly as poſſible, except only in a very few paſſages; where, for obvious reaſons, it was neceſſary to give a different turn to the expreſſions of this excellent lady. In all other inſtances, I have only cauſe to think meanly of myſelf, in proportion as I have departed from the original; as nothing can be more pure, more inſtructive, or more affecting, than the genuine dictates of that heart, which gave utterance to theſe moſt intereſting conferences.

If, upon the whole, the following work be read with candour, the tranſlator has no doubt of the reader's indulgence; if otherwiſe, he has little to hope for, either with reſpect to the reader or himſelf: if he is deſirous to profit by the inſtructions here preſented to him, he will be more diſpoſed to tranſcribe them into his own conduct, than to criticiſe on the preciſe terms in which they are conveyed.

There

There never was a period in which ſuch an addreſs to the prevailing manners of the age was more neceſſary than the preſent. It will be a matter of unſpeakable ſatisfaction, if it ſhould lay the leaſt reſtraint on any of the ſons or daughters of pleaſure; and if withdrawing their attention from the purſuit of a phantom, a bubble, and a toy, it ſhould direct it to thoſe objects, which religion recommends, which reaſon approves, and which virtue and good ſenſe univerſally applaud and admire.

S. G.

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ERRATA.

VOL. I.

Page 21, line 9, for *flightly* read *flighty*.
39, l. 14, for *they* read *you*.
76, l. 1, f. *patircularly* r. *particularly*.
178, l. 1, for *a age* read *an age*.

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56, l. 1, for *the* read *your*.
73, l. 18, for *petit* read *petits*.
142, l. 5, dele *him*.
200, l. 3, for *Chain* read *Charm*.

ADVICE
FROM A
LADY of QUALITY
TO HER
CHILDREN.

CONFERENCE I.

The History of her own Life.

THE very weak ſtate of health in which I have now been eighteen months, forbids me to hope for any long continuation of my life: I have determined therefore, my dear children, to call you together, as well to diſcharge my obligations, as to amuſe my ſufferings. By the loſs of your father, my duties as a mother ſeem to be redoubled; I am called upon to ſupply to you the want of his excellent advice, and to labour to render CONF. I.

CONF. I. render you worthy inheritors of his glory and his virtues.

You are not inſenſible of the obligations laid upon you to ſhew mankind from what anceſtors you derive your origin. Their hiſtory you are ſufficiently acquainted with, to know *who* they were, and how they diſtinguiſhed themſelves: but perhaps their example may leſs ſenſibly affect your minds, than my advice; eſpecially if you conſider, that it is your beſt friend, who is now converſing with you; one, whoſe inſtructions are the dictates of affection, and the reſult of a tender regard for your happineſs. The only books, from which my precepts ſhall be drawn, are experience, a knowledge of the world,

world, and the convictions of my own heart. CONF. I.

DESCENDED from a family not leſs diſtinguiſhed by its misfortunes than its honours, I was left an orphan at ten years of age. My education fell under the direction of my father's ſiſter, whoſe inclination, as well as rank, drew her frequently to court: no time was loſt in furniſhing me with maſters of every kind. I ſoon became an object of attention, and my friends took care to announce me poſſeſſed of a conſiderable fortune. The world preſented itſelf to my view in the moſt brilliant colours; and with ſingular delight I indulged the deception. A ſucceſſion of amuſements ſerved to ſtifle reflection, and I lived for

CONF. I. for no other purpoſe than to purſue my pleaſures.

SOMETIMES my ſoul, not quite as yet debaſed, ſeemed deſirous to ſoar above theſe enchanting trifles; but vanity and diſſipation ſoon hurried me away, and effaced the impreſſions of reflection. How far from real happineſs is a life of ſubjection to prevailing faſhions, from which it has neither opportunity nor reſolution to withdraw itſelf! In vain do we perceive the miſeries, which intrude themſelves amidſt the pleaſures of the world: In vain do we receive inſtructions, by which we might be both affected and improved; we ſtill continue enſlaved to our paſſions, and eagerly embrace the phantom of deluſion.

I reſembled thoſe travellers, who, knowing the right way, yet thinking to ſhorten their journey, turn aſide from it, and are loſt. CONF. I.

ALL that were about me conſpired to fill my mind with falſe ideas: their language was that of flattery and impoſture: they either concealed from me my faults, or they only corrected ſuch as might ſerve to render me ridiculous. Scarce had I begun the day, when my attendants made it their buſineſs to inſpire me with a love of idleneſs and pleaſure: one part of it was ſpent in decorating my perſon with all the ornaments of dreſs; and the other in receiving the rewards of my unprofitable induſtry. I was admired in proportion to my external appearance, and this admira-

CONF. I.

tion ſerved only to feed my vanity.

I never ſhall forget, that, being one evening quite overcome with that ſatiety, which deſtroys the ſatisfaction of the votaries of pleaſure, I opened by chance a volume of moral eſſays, a few pages of which filled my ſoul with confuſion and remorſe: "*Either*, ſaid I to myſelf, *I am a dupe to the life which I now lead, or this writer is an egregious impoſtor.*"

THESE reflections began to diſquiet me; when I was informed, that it was time for me to go to a ball, to which I had been invited: my guardian, who took me with her in her coach, obſerved that I was unuſually penſive; for which ſhe ſeriouſly reproved me. Tho' ſhe

was

was in many reſpects an excellent woman, ſhe was almoſt wholly engaged in the purſuit of amuſements: ſhe repeated her cenſures, when we entered the ball-room, in which every thing appeared truly magnificent; the elegant taſte of the D—ſs of —— had brought together perſons of the moſt eminent rank, beauty, and accompliſhments. CONF. I.

Too ſoon, the inſtruments of muſic, and the harmony of the voices, made me forget my Monitor, and all his reaſoning: my heart, again ſeduced by pleaſure, quickly perſuaded me, that ſuch auſtere morality was calculated only to fill us with melancholy: I danced with ſome degree of elegance, and the praiſes beſtowed upon

CONF. I. upon me were exceſſive; in ſhort, I returned home more enchanted than ever, with the world.

WE croſſed the park, which a judicious diſtribution of lamps had ſo illuminated, as to give it almoſt the glare of noon-day: the crowd of people about us, the variety of faces and dreſſes, an unreſtrained feſtivity, which every where prevailed, all ſerved to ſeduce my ſoul with ſtronger deluſions. One needs no more than ſuch a ſcene as this, to ruin one's taſte for ever. It fills the mind with a vaſt idea of the world and its pleaſures; and when once the heart has received theſe firſt impreſſions, it is next to impoſſible to efface them.

SIX years paſſed away in a continual round of pleaſure and diverſions;

ſions; at the end of which, I was married to your much honoured father. Some circumſtances, fortunate for me, gave *him* the preference in my regard to ſeveral young noblemen, who had profeſſed the ſtrongeſt attachment to me: had either of *theſe* ſucceeded in his addreſſes, I ſhould have been wedded to folly and repentance; it was my happier lot to be connected with diſcretion and politeneſs. CONF. I.

WE muſt needs appear with eclat on our marriage, and in this reſpect my natural turn of mind was of great ſervice to me: it made me as ſplendid, as I was vain; and as our income was ſuch as enabled me to indulge my taſte for ſhew, I gave the reins to it without reſtraint.

CONF. I. I kept a ſort of court, in which I preſided as a ſovereign princeſs: my courtiers were laviſh of their praiſes, they were ſuppliant for favours, and my huſband and I were conſidered as beings ſuperior to the reſt of mankind in happineſs and honours.

A war with the houſe of *Auſtria* deprived me of your father for a time: he parted from me with that heroic ſpirit, which diſtinguiſhed his character to the lateſt moment of his life; while in his abſence I gave myſelf up to ſorrow and regret. His letters, however, comforted me; and no ſooner was my peace of mind reſtored, than my taſte for pleaſure returned. The opera of *Thetis* was performed; at which I was preſent; and then it was,

was, that my fondneſs for public diverſions reſumed its dominion in my heart. I now put myſelf forward to ſit in judgement on every new theatrical performance; and was the firſt to admire the decorations of the ſtage. The world is like a troubled ſea, whoſe waves always carry us away much farther than we at firſt intended to go. CONF. I.

HOWEVER, notwithſtanding my allowed taſte for whatever might gratify the ſenſes, or encourage vanity, I was generally conſidered as a pattern of prudence and diſcretion: people were aſtoniſhed to ſee a young woman, only twenty years old, with no other paſſion than a love for dreſs, and ſhew and diverſions. The world cannot conceive it poſſible, that while we are gliding

CONF. I.

ing down the ſtream of luxury and pleaſure, we are, in the eye of reaſon, objects of pity.

THE hints, which I had received from my friendly monitor, whoſe writings I had only curſorily dipt into, were perpetually obtruding themſelves; but like thoſe gentle breezes which ruffle the ſurface of the waters, they only ſerved to glance upon my heart. What ſurprized me was, that a very diſcreet relation of mine to whom I had mentioned this author, ſtrictly forbade my looking into it. But this ſhe did, as ſhe many years afterwards declared, merely to excite my eagerneſs to read it, and attach me more ſtrongly to my book. She well knew, that prohibition ſerves only to ſtimulate; and that to interdict,

erdict, is often the ſureſt means of fix-
ing our affections on that which is
forbidden us. Her ſtratagem ſuc-
ceeded; I was never at reſt, 'till
I became poſſeſſed of theſe eſſays,
and 'till I had read them again and
again. His reflections gave me
ſome uneaſineſs; but I was ſo far
from being amended by them, that
I only compared this emotion to
the tranſient effect of a tragical re-
preſentation on the ſtage. CONF. I.

I was affected for a moment, and
that was all. At length, your fa-
ther returned from the war, co-
vered with wounds and laurels: the
compliments which were paid to
him at court, and the honours
which were heaped upon him, oc-
caſioned a ſecond diverſion of my
thoughts, which plunged me deeper
than

CONF. I.

than ever in the gulph of diſſipation.

MY firſt ſtudy was to ſurpaſs all others in the elegance of my entertainments; and in this I was very ſucceſsful: my exquiſite taſte was generally admired, and every one expreſſed the higheſt ſatisfaction. What an encouragement was this to a woman, whoſe only ambition was to ſhine in her ſphere, to pleaſe and be applauded! You will not wonder, that our expences were exceſſive, and that to ſupport our vanity, we diminiſhed our ſubſtance, and conſequently your inheritance.

YOU ſee, my dear children, that I lay open to you, without reſerve, all the circumſtances of my life; and that my language is that of one,

one, whoſe heart dictates nothing but tenderneſs and ſincerity. Where my conduct has been faulty, you will, I am ſure, be the firſt to forgive: it may, perhaps, prove a fortunate circumſtance for *you*, that I, who have been firſt ſeduced into the ways of vanity and folly, am the better enabled to point out to you that path, which it will be your wiſdom and happineſs to purſue. CONF. I.

CERTAIN it is, that this abridgment of our fortune wrought ſome change in my manner of life: your father again left me in obedience to the orders of the court, which ſent him into *Italy*; and I endeavoured to amuſe myſelf in his abſence by reading our beſt hiſtorians.

There

CONF. I.

THERE with delight I found the name which you bear, mentioned with honour in the French and Engliſh hiſtory: there ſaw I thoſe virtues diſplayed by your anceſtors, which I hope it will be the ſtudy of your lives to imitate.

ABOUT this time, my friendſhip commenced with the Counteſs of S——, an excellent lady, of whom the hand of death has lately deprived the world; in which ſhe ſeemed to live for no other purpoſe, than to do good. Her converſation charmed me; her prudence delighted me; there was no opportunity of inſtruction which ſhe did not improve; and this ſhe did with ſo much eaſe and affability, and in a manner ſo natural and agreeable, that the moſt inconſiderate

onſiderate could not but attend to her: ſhe often urged to me the ceſſity of uniting in the ſame aracter the Philoſopher and the hriſtian. Here I muſt acknowdge, not without taking ſhame to yſelf, that the pleaſures of the orld left me nothing more than a uitleſs deſire of being what I ught to be. It was continually nterpoſing itſelf between the conviction of my judgement, and the ropenſities of my will, 'till my nind was utterly diſtracted: I would, and I would not; and my exiſtence was nothing more than a life perpetually interrupted with doubt and perplexity. CONF. I.

IN this ſtrange ſituation did your father find me at his return: the King received him with that gracious air,

CONF. I.

which often ſerves inſtead of more ſubſtantial favours; and which is in fact equivalent to a recompence: every one partook of my joy, and dragged me out, as it were in ſpight of myſelf, into the midſt of pleaſures and diverſions. Paris and Verſailles each in its turn beheld me wholly engaged in doing honour to my huſband on account of his good fortune. Pleaſure and ambition are cruel tyrants; they leave us not a moment to ourſelves; and when they have filled us with hope, they almoſt always abandon us to diſappointment.

YOUR father, though much engaged in the Buſineſs of the world, had his intervals of ſolitude and retirement: he ſometimes pleaded indiſpoſition, that he might apply himſelf

himſelf to the ſtudy of his pro- CONF. I.
feſſion; and as I imagined to amuſe himſelf by a change of employment. He found, that the world has every thing that is good in it except true wiſdom.

THE reſtleſs ſpirit of mankind renewed the war; and again obliged me to live in a ſtate of ſeparation from a huſband, who was dearer to me than myſelf. His valour, which rendered him inſenſible of danger, procured him, at the ſame time, the honour—of being grievouſly wounded, and of being made a Lieutenant General. Joy and ſolicitude by turns took poſſeſſion of my heart; and in this anxious ſtate I continued, 'till I was fully aſſured of his perfect recovery.

CONF. I.

THIS advancement of my huſband revived my paſſion for the vanities of the world: I now again felt myſelf inclined to taſte largely of the pleaſures of the court. I hired one houſe at Verſailles, and another at Fontainbleau; and my taſte for luxury, together with my natural vanity, led me to fit them up in the moſt expenſive manner. I piqued myſelf on having more elegant furniture than any woman of my rank, and on having my table more ſumptuouſly ſupplied. I became proverbial for the magnificence of my entertainments, and happy was the man who could be preſent at them. Perſons of faſhion aſſembled at my houſe with eagerneſs, and each endeavoured to diſtinguiſh

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inguiſh himſelf by the utmoſt exertion of pleaſantry and humour.

I never found myſelf ſo far removed from wiſdom, as when I was ſurrounded by the moſt celebrated wits: I heard nothing from them but ſallies of mirth, which interrupted all ſerious thoughts; and ſuch ſlightly converſation as ſerved only to ſtifle reflection. Our deciſions were peremptory on every ſubject, and were wholly influenced by faſhion and by prejudice.

THUS was my mind entirely taken up in the purſuit of folly, inſtead of being employed, as it ought to have been, in attending to your education.

THE prevalence of an abſurd cuſtom had taught me, my dear children, that I ought not to have

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you with me more than a few days in a year; with which cuſtom I could not comply, without doing violence to my tenderneſs and affection for you. Inſtead of endeavouring to inform myſelf what ſchool was under the beſt and wiſeſt regulation, my enquiry was, which was the moſt genteel; and I was much more deſirous, that you ſhould form honourable connections, than that you ſhould receive good inſtructions: thus did I ſecretly encourage your vanity, while your improvement ought to have been my principal care. When we cannot amend our faults, the leaſt we can do is to acknowledge them: and do not think that I offer any violence to myſelf in thus confeſſing my folly,

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and indiſcretion: it is my greateſt comfort, that I am giving you this ſureſt evidence of my repentance. If my affection for you were leſs than it is, I ſhould ſpeak to you with leſs ſincerity; it is the compunction I feel, for having liſtened more attentively to the voice of cuſtom than to that of my duty, which extorts from me this undiſguiſed confeſſion of my miſconduct: in ſhort, my extreme ſolicitude for you baniſhes every ſelfiſh conſideration from my mind. CONF. I.

THE conduct of your father diſtinguiſhed him now more than ever: he was deſervedly eſteemed a moſt accompliſhed ſoldier; inſomuch that I dare venture to aſſert, without fearing the imputation of partiality or oſtentation, that the dig-

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nity of Field-Marſhal to which he was advanced, was no more than a diſtinction due to his ſuperior merit as an officer. He ſaw himſelf elevated to the higheſt point of honour in his profeſſion, at a time of life, wherein he was very capable of enjoying the fruits of his promotion; being at that time not fifty years old.

I was too fond of gaiety and pleaſure, not to ſurpaſs on this occaſion all my former inſtances of luxury and expence: balls, illuminations, and entertainments of every kind conſpired to celebrate that happy event, which filled my heart with joy; and nothing was now to be ſeen around me, but trophies erected to my vanity: I was wholly taken up in going from one

one circle to another, eager to receive congratulation and applauſe from every quarter. But how inconſtant is all earthly glory! alas! your father died within three years after his promotion to the honour of a marſhal: and my heart, overpowered by this dreadful ſtroke, ſeemed to go down with him even into the grave: he died like a Chriſtian philoſopher; full of loyalty to his King, full of tenderneſs for his wife and children; burning with a fervent deſire to be admitted into the preſence of GOD, and only concerned that it was not his good fortune to fall in the field of battle: He would have been better pleaſed, had his laſt breath been drawn in the ſervice of his country, and had he been permitted to make compenſation CONF. I.

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penſation with his life, for the honours which his ſovereign had heaped upon him.

THE firſt year of my widowhood was wholly given up to the effuſions of grief; to an utter diſreliſh for every kind of ſatisfaction, and to an entire indifference about myſelf and every thing around me. I thought of nothing, but a moſt affectionate huſband, who was now no more; and this ſad idea ſerved only to fill my ſoul with the moſt melancholy reflections.

I could then have readily anſwered for myſelf, that the world would never more take poſſeſſion of my heart; but the world is not content with being a maſter only; it is a *tyrant*, which holds its vaſſals in fetters of iron; from which in vain

vain I endeavoured to releaſe myſelf; my former habits reſumed their empire in my heart; and tho' I did not forget my huſband, I forgat all my reſolutions. I now appeared a faſhionable widow, wholly taken up by the pleaſures of the world, and all its vanities. My greateſt comfort in this moment of reflection is, that I never could be prevailed with to liſten to any propoſals of a ſecond marriage: I had too much reſpect for the memory of your father, ever to conſent to loſe his name; and I had too much regard for you his children, ever to endanger your welfare and happineſs by ſuch a ſtep. This double attachment was ſuperior to every other conſideration; I felt myſelf altogether devoted to my children; CONF. I.

who

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who I feared might be leſs the objects of my attention, if I transferred my affections to any other: this ſingle circumſtance was ſufficient to determine me. Heaven grant, that you may make me the beſt return for this ſacrifice, not merely by your thanks, but by the tendereſt regard for my happineſs. I have no other wiſh, than to excite your affection; and as I am truly ſenſible of the full extent of my own, no one ſurely can blame me for earneſtly deſiring, that our love for each other ſhould be reciprocal.

WERE I ſo unhappy as to diſcover in either of you an abatement of affection towards me, I ſhould remind you, that there is not one of you, whoſe birth was not almoſt

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the occaſion of my death; and that the more I ſuffered in bringing you into the world, the more cloſely is my heart attached to you: that only knows to what degree you have hitherto engaged its affections; that only can inform you, that amidſt the diſſipations of a life of pleaſure, I never felt any *real* ſatisfaction but in ſeeing you thus ſitting round me: happy moment! the only one which can afford me a gleam of conſolation for a loſs, which I can never ceaſe to lament. CONF. I.

BUT to return to the world; which continually enſlaved my affections, and which, whilſt I was engaged in the gratification of my paſſion for pleaſure, ſuffered me not to reſt, day or night. I had ſacrificed to it the beſt moments of my

my life; the hours deſtined to calm repoſe were devoted to it; and on the return of every day, freſh ſnares were laid for me; and new temptations offered to engage me in its ſervice. I found myſelf abſolutely ſubject to its caprice; I was preſent at every public aſſembly; I had a high opinion of its extravagances; I ſtudied all its refinements; I commended only what the world approved; I rejected only what the world condemned; I was in ſhort as much a ſlave to its commands, as one who has no power to move or act, without the permiſſion of his maſter.

SOMETIMES, quite wearied with its importunity, I wiſhed to ſhake off the yoke; and to enter into a ſerious examination of my heart;

of

of which it had too long maintained the entire diſpoſal; but ſuch tranſient inclinations only ſerved to convince me of my weakneſs. This ſufficiently appeared, when, after ſome days of ſtrict retirement, which ſhould have been the commencement of a new life, a ſlight invitation called me forth again, to put myſelf under the power of my tyrant, and made me fooliſhly repent of having ever wiſhed to withdraw myſelf from his dominion.

IN the mean time I began to perceive that the ſpring of my life was paſſed and gone, and that it was time to break the charm, which thus ſeduced me: however the lot was caſt, and rather than have recourſe to reaſon, I employed

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ployed every artifice to ſupply the deficiency of blooming youth. Thus did I at once endeavour to impoſe on others and delude myſelf; and nothing but the aſtoniſhing incident which I am going to relate, was capable of overcoming this dangerous illuſion.

HAVING been informed that a new play was to be acted, I engaged to go with a party of friends to the theatre, and among the reſt with Lady ———, whom I loved with the tendereſt affection: at the appointed hour, I called at the door of my friend: ſurprized, at my arrival, not to find any of the ſervants ready to receive me, I immediately ran up into her bed-chamber; I went to her, and ſaluting her, I aſked her the reaſon why ſhe

was

was not ready to go with me: Oh! Heaven! She was dead: her countenance ſtill retained its beauty; her fleſh was yet warm, but her body was motionleſs and lifeleſs: having ſhrieked ſo loud as to fill the whole houſe with my cries, I fell into a ſwoon, which laſted above an hour and a half. The domeſtics, who in their conſternation had fled different ways, reaſſembled at the noiſe of my cries; and uſed every poſſible endeavour to bring me to my ſenſes; after which, they informed me, that their miſtreſs was juſt dead of a quinſey, that had choked her: conceive if you can, the horrors of my ſituation; I was almoſt ſuffocated with grief, which laboured to expreſs itſelf; and in the utmoſt

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terror and amazement, I withdrew from this ſcene.

BY this method it ſeemed that heaven thought fit to act upon my mind; to diſſipate impoſture and deluſion. I returned to my houſe, wherein I ſaw nothing but emblems of pride and vanity: I now diſcovered for the firſt time, that thoſe ſpecious charms, with which the world had ſo long deceived me, were in reality no better than ſplendid miſeries: I now reflected that I had been only a dupe to my own pride and the faſhions of the world: that I had been running after a phantom of happineſs, which had eſcaped me; that human life was moſt uncertain in its tenure; and in ſhort, that my eſſayiſt, who had diſtreſſed me, had told

told me the truth; and that one must be abſolutely blind not to ſee the force of his arguments. CONF. I.

As I had learnt from experience to diſtruſt my own weakneſs, I felt no inclination to make a public profeſſion of my change of ſentiments; eſpecially, as I knew that it is not eaſy to ſupport a conſiſtency of character in extremes; that too great zeal is ſeldom laſting, and almoſt always indiſcreet; and that to diſcharge the duties of Chriſtianity, it was ſufficient to be —a Chriſtian.

HOWEVER, I inſenſibly withdrew myſelf from the world and its pleaſures; and under a pretence of taking care of my health, as my conſtitution had been always delicate, I began with living very

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much alone, and no more mixing in large companies. I was conſidered as an invalid; and after a few cenſures from my acquaintance, the world as eaſily reſigned me, as it had formerly ſolicited me. There is nothing ſooner forgotten, than a perſon, who wiſhes to be ſo: one's retirement from the world may afford a topic of converſation for a day, and to-morrow nothing more is ſaid about us.

MY ſolitude being neither the affectation of ſingularity, nor the effect of ill humour, but the reſult of ſerious reflection, I continued to diſcharge the duties which I owed to ſociety: I made my appearance at court, when it was thought neceſſary; I viſited my friends, when civility required it: I paid that attention

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tention to the duties of my ſtation which it appeared to demand; and I laid it down as a maxim, only to abſtain from ſuch things, as religion and reaſon forbade.

VERY ſoon the pleaſure of reading ſerious books, and of ſtudying myſelf, convinced me, that true happineſs conſiſts in conformity to truth, and that they who give themſelves up to a life of diſſipation, have in reality nothing more than the ſhadow of happineſs.

THAT horrible ſpectacle beforementioned continually preſented itſelf to my mind: I never can forget, that whilſt I fancied I was embracing a living friend, I held in my arms only a lifeleſs corpſe, on which God himſelf had already paſſed an irrevocable ſentence! At

midnight the image of my friend very frequently appeared to my diſturbed imagination, whom I had been wiſhing to drag to the theatre, while heaven was pronouncing an irreverſible decree either of life or death everlaſting.

THIS it was, my children, which opened my eyes to a ſight of my duty; this it was which determined me to cultivate and improve your good diſpoſitions, and to ſow in your hearts the ſeeds of virtue and religion.

MAY heaven bleſs and proſper my deſign! Indeed it is with the greateſt ſatisfaction I obſerve, that your ſentiments appear to be ſuch, as ſeem likely to do honour to the memory of your father; and that you want nothing but a little more knowledge

knowledge and information, and a little more inclination to attain it. It is with a deſign to aſſiſt you herein, that I have determined to call you together every evening, when my health will permit, and to diſcourſe with you on ſome of the moſt intereſting ſubjects in the world. Having now given you the hiſtory of my own life, I ſhall henceforth concern myſelf only about your's; and ſhall endeavour to furniſh you with the beſt inſtructions in my power, that they may become acceptable to your God, uſeful to your country, and worthy of the King whom you have the honour to ſerve. CONF. I.

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On ORDER.

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me. His laſt words ſtill ſounding in my ear, as if they had been uttered by a voice from heaven, dwelt only on this great ſubject: the recollection fills my ſoul with an inexpreſſible mixture of tenderneſs and grief. CONF. II.

ALAS! our united tears will never be ſufficient to deplore our loſs: thoſe which I ſee you ſhed at this time, are the ſtrongeſt aſſurance that you inherit his generous ſentiments, and it is the only pleaſure which at preſent I feel myſelf capable of enjoying.

YOUR excellent father, juſt before his death, taking me by the hand, expreſſed himſelf nearly in the following words: *Let your firſt care, I moſt earneſtly entreat you, be the education of my children: be your-*

ſelf

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always kept it treaſured up in my breaſt, as a valuable depoſit, which I intended ſome time or other to produce, whenever you ſhould be enabled to judge of its value and importance. CONF. II.

I call heaven to witneſs, that neither buſineſs nor pleaſure has ever been able to efface the remembrance of your father; on the contrary, he is always preſent to my mind; and indeed it is this lively repreſentation of him, which alone enables me to ſupport his loſs. Without this painful reſource, my mind would have abſolutely ſunk beneath the burthen of my grief.

BUT now the hour approaches, when I ſhall be re-united to the tendereſt of huſbands, when our aſhes, mixed together, ſhall teach you, my

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dear children, the inſtability of every earthly poſſeſſion, and the wiſdom of deſpiſing the momentary vanities of life, when brought into compariſon with the treaſures of an immortal ſtate.

IT is by ſuch reflections as theſe, that order and regularity are preſerved in our minds, and that we are taught the neceſſity of doing nothing contrary to the rules of prudence and diſcretion.

THIS practice is ſo eſſential to our happineſs, and ſo conformable to the deſigns of our Creator, that it cannot be neglected without a violation of the laws of God. It is this regard to duty and propriety, by which peace is preſerved in kingdoms, and union in families: it is this which regulates the conduct

duct of the ſervant towards his maſter, and the ſubject towards his prince; it is this which engages my love towards you, and your reſpect towards me: it is this which makes you ſtudious to mitigate my ſorrows, and me inceſſantly ſolicitous to advance your happineſs.

IT is this regularity of conduct, which makes us good parents, good friends, and good citizens, which gives us a right judgment of things, and aſſiſts us both in the choice of the fitteſt time and the propereſt method of doing what ever is to be done. It is one of the greateſt misfortunes in the world, to live without any ſtated rule of conduct, in perpetual tumult and confuſion. Our life ſhould be a tranſcript of the harmony of the univerſe,

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univerſe, which could not ſubſiſt, much leſs attract our admiration, were it not for that juſt proportion, which is diſcoverable in all its parts. Take away order from the world, and you reduce it to a frightful chaos; leave man without any other guide than his own paſſions and caprice, and there will be nothing but perpetual diſcord betwixt his judgment and his will.

RUIN enſues, when a man exhibits in his own ill-regulated mind the miſeries of anarchy; his ideas are confuſed; his imagination is bewildered; his conſcience is miſled; his reaſon is obſcured; and his ſoul becomes the ſeat of tumult and confuſion.

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IF you do not accuſtom yourſelves, at your firſt ſetting out in life, to lay down ſome regular plan of conduct, you will never attain to that rectitude of judgment, which eſtimates things according to their worth, and which in the midſt of errors and prejudices will enable you to give the preference to truth.

YOUR father's inclinations were ſo wiſely regulated, that his behaviour was always influenced by a ſtrict regard to propriety: he knew, with the philoſopher, that we ought to weigh the motives of our conduct; and every evening to enter into an examination of our actions.

The man who lives at random, is a ſlave to his own whims and caprice. The world reprobates ſuch

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ſuch an one, as a monſter which diſturbs its harmony; and ſociety rejects him as a being incapable of friendſhip. We ſee, in ſhort, that, whoever is thus irregular in his own mind is deſtitute of every quality, which can contribute to the ornament or benefit of human life: his manners are diſguſting, his expences are exceſſive, and his whole conduct unaccountable.

Do not think that I am carried away by my imagination beyond the truth; which I ſhall always ſtrictly obſerve in converſing with you; the too ſad experience of many confirms what I ſay; and it may ſerve to teach you that it is impoſſible rightly to manage your affairs, or diſcharge your duty, without

without a proper command of your mind and paſſions; every movement of which ſhould be as nicely regulated, as thoſe of a well finiſhed clock.

THE exact proportion obſervable in every work of God is intended to teach us, that order is the greateſt beauty in nature, and that to deſpiſe this, is to counteract one of the great laws of the creator of the univerſe. Endeavour then, I beſeech you, to imitate in your behaviour that general harmony in the creation, which in the courſe of every year, ſupplies us with whatever is either agreeable or uſeful: let your ſtudies be methodical, all conducted rather with a view to inſtruction, than mere amuſement. If you read without

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plan, you will overload your memory without improving it, and your knowlege will be little better than an undigeſted chaos.

THE mind, in which diſorder prevails, is, in the eye of reaſon, like a city without government, or a houſe without unanimity. But a perſon of this diſpoſition deceives himſelf; and fancies, that if he keeps clear of thoſe irregularities, which are offenſive to ſociety, he may make himſelf eaſy, tho' he has all the reaſon in the world to be diſſatisfied with his way of life.

YOU will find many, who ſeem to delight in nothing but irregularity; who go to reſt, when others riſe; who eat, when others faſt; who ſtay at home, when others go

to

church; in ſhort, whoſe chief employment ſeems to be, to break through every rule, without the leaſt regard to method in any part of their conduct. CONF. II.

ALAS! when I was one of theſe faſhionable ladies, whoſe gaiety was an object of envy, I confounded night with day, I knew no law but my own whim; I had no time but for pleaſure, no plan, but to avoid every thing that was like regularity.

BE aſſured, that there is nothing ſo bewildered, as the life of a perſon, given up to the hurry and tumult of the world: ſuch a one has no ſenſe of the value of time; ſhe knows no diſtinction of days, and pays no regard to duty: ſhe ſtudies faſhions,

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is wholly taken up with trifles; ſhe delights in that which debaſes the mind, and is contrary to reaſon; ſhe is perpetually ſeeking happineſs where it is not to be found; and tho' wearied with the purſuit, renews it every day.

THE world is full of perſons, always engaged in new projects, and diſtracted with new deſires, who die without reflection, becauſe they have lived without any knowledge of themſelves. When the mind is thus diſordered, it is afraid to look into itſelf; or if it ventures to examine things at all, it only does it ſuperficially. The ſenſes are ſo many tyrants, from whoſe power we are unable to deliver ourſelves; and nothing appears really valuable, which does not adminiſter

adminiſter to their gratification.

MAINTAIN then the dominion over your own minds, that you be not overcome by thoſe paſſions, which will lay ſiege to your virtue; your thoughts will then be regulated by wiſdom, and you will be raiſed above thoſe clouds, which obſcure the light of the underſtanding. Each of us may be conſidered as an epitome of the world, which is ſubject to eclipſes, changes of weather, to ſtorms and tempeſts: we all obſerve the ſtrange revolutions which happen in the univerſe; but as Providence, in the midſt of ſuch a multitude of created beings, preſerves the utmoſt harmony both in heaven and earth, ſo ought reaſon to preſerve in the human mind

CONF. II. the ſtricteſt attention to order and peace. Without this we degrade ourſelves below the meaneſt inſect, or even the inanimate parts of the creation, which only ſubſiſt, to anſwer the purpoſes for which they were made. Behold the bee, or the ant; a thouſand times wiſer, each of them, than the man who deſpiſes them; theſe never deviate from the laws of their nature, nor from the courſe which Providence has aſſigned them: it is only by an imitation of their conduct and foreſight, that families are maintained, and kingdoms preſerve their power and ſplendor.

THIS may ſerve to convince you, that whatever ſtate of life you are placed in, it will always be full of diſquiet, if your judgment and your paſſions

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paſſions are at variance with each other; you muſt therefore frequently examine into the ſprings and motives of your conduct, in order to regulate your affections. You will then ſee, as in a picture, the tendency of your actions, and will ſoon be enabled to rectify whatever is amiſs in you.

WHEN a houſe is on fire, with what eagerneſs do we haſten to put it out? And ſhall we ſuffer our paſſions to burn with fury in the midſt of us, without giving ourſelves the leaſt trouble to extinguiſh the flame? We ſeldom reflect that the mind is a kingdom, which cannot be well governed, without a conſtant care as well to defend it from its enemies, as to promote whatever may tend to the eſtabliſh-

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CONF. II. ment of peace and tranquility. Conſider the ſtars which ſhine in their courſes over our heads; conſider the elements which are the ſource of life and reſpiration; alas! what monitors are theſe to man to be always ready like them to execute the commands of God! This view of the creation perpetually reminds us, that every rational creature alſo ought to move in its proper ſphere, and diſcharge its reſpective duty. When we only act as we are influenced by a capricious humour, we inſult the wiſdom of a God of order, and raiſe a perpetual tumult in our own breaſts.

I have always obſerved, that perſons of a diſſipated turn are as much diſordered with reſpect to their affairs, as they are unſettled in their

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their own minds; and leave no inheritance to their children, but debts and law-ſuits. There is an eaſy kind of arithmetic which every lover of method is acquainted with; and which conſiſts in computing our obligations and our neceſſities, and our ability to anſwer both, in order to keep ourſelves within due bounds, and to pay a proper regard to that which may reaſonably be expected from us. If you have not this love of method which I wiſh to recommend, you will never be able to regulate your actions, or your families, or your own minds. You will either behave with too great haughtineſs, or with too great familiarity towards your domeſtics; you will not diſtinguiſh what is ſuperfluous from what is neceſſary; and for want of calculation,

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calculation, you will have nothing but creditors, or debtors who have nothing to pay.

You are born, my children, to a conſiderable fortune: but what will become of it, if its uſe is not regulated by œconomy; riches are abſolute ruin to a diſſipated owner: the ſame confuſion which diſtracts his mind produces an inconſiſtency in all his actions; one while, you ſee an aſtoniſhing prodigality, at another time you are ſhocked with as unreaſonable avarice: he can throw away money, but he cannot give it: he ſacrifices every thing to pleaſure or to pride, but nothing to juſtice.

WHEN you are confirmed in this wiſe habit of acting methodically, every part of your conduct will be happily

happily adjuſted: you will ſet apart proper ſeaſons for ſtudy and for recreation; you will manage your time and your income with prudence; you will diſtribute exact juſtice to your neighbours, and you will never engage in any important enterprize, without *conſidering the end*: nothing will ever make you forget the duties which you owe to your character and ſtation; no day will paſs, in which you will not remember your duty to God: we never loſe ſight of theſe duties, but when we give the preference to a life of irregularity; when we go on without a ſingle thought what we are, and what will become of us: hence it is, that the affections of diſorderly perſons differ very little from the propenſities

CONF. II.

propenſities of the brute creation.

YOUR good diſpoſitions encourage me to hope that my advice will ſink deep into your hearts; remember always that it is the counſel of a mother, who would gladly ſacrifice her life to purchaſe your happineſs; and of a friend, whoſe heart is bound up with your's, and who would not wiſh to live a moment, but in the moſt intimate connection with you. All the faults of my life have been offences againſt *order*, which can never be abſolutely neglected, without fruſtrating the end of our creation; for God hath doubtleſs made us for this purpoſe, that we might moderate our deſires, and keep our paſſions within proper bounds.

BUT

BUT if your intentions are good, as I truſt they are, enough has been ſaid on this ſubject; beſides, my want of ſtrength reminds me that it is time to relieve myſelf and diſmiſs you for the preſent.

CON-

CONFERENCE III.

On true PATRIOTISM.

CON. III. I DESIGN that the duties which you owe your country ſhall be the ſubject of this day's inſtructions; but as this is above my ability properly to handle, your father ſhall ſpeak inſtead of me. A little before his death, he left me theſe reflections, deſiring me to communicate them to you, when you were of a proper age to receive benefit from them. Read them then, and let us liſten to them with great attention.

THE

CON. III.

THE eldeſt ſon received the manuſcript from his mother, and thus began:

"PROVIDENCE, which directs the place of our birth, as well as every other circumſtance of it, has ordained that the country in which we were born, ſhould be dearer to us than any other; and that we may not have the leaſt doubt of the truth of it, this ſentiment is ſo univerſally impreſſed on our minds, that there is not a man upon earth, who is not naturally *a patriot*. The whole world may be conſidered as one great family; but the alliance is much ſtricter betwixt thoſe who ſerve the ſame maſter, and are ſubject to the ſame laws. They have all one common intereſt; good and evil are indiſcriminately diſpenſed; and each

CON. III. each partakes more or leſs of the proſperity or misfortunes of the ſtate.

"THOUGH you owe the tendereſt affection to your mother, you muſt never forget that much is alſo due to the country which gave you birth; and which conſiders you as its children and its ſubjects: you muſt divide betwixt them thoſe ſentiments of love and reſpect, which nature has implanted in your hearts. Nay, I will venture to ſay, however jealous I may be of my rights, as your father, that you ought not to heſitate, in a caſe of neceſſity, whether you ſhould leave me or not, when your country demands your aſſiſtance. Then it is, that with the heroic ſelf denial of a Roman, you muſt ſacrifice every other conſideration,

ſideration, and poſtpone every other intereſt to the duty which you owe to your King and country. CON. III.

"THE firſt character you ſuſtained was that of a citizen: the ſtate then recognized you as ſubjects intimately connected with it: religion adopts the ſame language with reaſon: ſhe will teach you that your induſtry and abilities ought to be united in the ſervice of your country; and that it is an abſolute robbery to deprive her of this aſſiſtance; ſhe has a right to demand an account of our engagements, and to expect the application of our talents to her advantage: they, therefore, who only employ themſelves in the gratification of their own vanity, or who lie down in a ſtate of torpid indolence,

CON. III. can only be conſidered as burthens to the ſtate; or as waſps, which come to devour the labour of the bees.

"WE are much miſtaken, if we imagine ourſelves at liberty to engage in thoſe ſtudies and employments alone which are moſt pleaſing to ourſelves; the purſuits of one who wiſhes to be called a patriot, ought to be directed only by the love of his country, and an earneſt deſire to promote her welfare. What would be the ſtate of that kingdom, in which every one, being maſter of his own actions, ſhould do juſt what he pleaſes, and employ all his powers of mind and body only in the gratification of his own fancy? A chearful ſubmiſſion to our governors, and a readineſs to ſtand forth

forth in our country's cauſe, give us the trueſt picture of a well ordered and happy government. CON. III.

"You who are already engaged in the public ſervice, ought to be more ſenſible of this than any others; you are inveſted with honours and advantages, only on condition that you be always ready to aſſiſt your country; woe be to you, if ever ye forget, that the very blood which runs through your veins muſt be dedicated to *her*; that ſhe has as much right to diſpoſe of your life, as you have to diſpoſe of your fortune; and that you are no longer worthy to live, than while you maintain the character of good ſubjects.

"HISTORY, ſacred and prophane, is full of examples of perſons, ready to ſacrifice their lives for their coun-

CON. III. try's good; even women, forgetting the weakneſs of their ſex, have become heroines, when the public welfare demanded their aſſiſtance."

——HERE the generous mother, carried beyond herſelf, in a kind of rapture, interrupted her ſon.

INDEED, my children, I firmly believe this female heroiſm to be very attainable. I myſelf actually feel reſolution enough, notwithſtanding my bodily infirmities, to carry me even to the mouth of a cannon, and encourage you by my exhortations to chooſe an honorable death, if my duty rendered ſuch a trial neceſſary: reaſon, in that caſe, would make me altogether regardleſs of myſelf; the conſideration that I had brought ſuch worthy children into the world, would dry up my tears; and ren-

der

der me rather an object of envy than of pity, in the ſight of my ſovereign and my country.——But go on. CON. III.

"THE enjoyment of life is by no means equivalent to the honour of dying for our country: for life is but a ſhadow; whereas the glory which accrues from ſuch a death, is a light which ſurvives the obſcurity of time, and ſhines with everlaſting brightneſs. You find that *Marcellus* and many other heroes are ſtill remembered, as if they were but juſt dead; they ſacrificed their mortal part, that they might become immortal. The renown, which accompanied their laſt breath, ſeems to have perpetuated their duration; and there is no man of ſenſe and reflection, who would not be glad to ſhare their fate.

CON. III. " It is not enough, my children, to wear the livery of men of valour; to live in a corps, whoſe examples encourage bravery: fortitude muſt be ingrafted in the heart; and it muſt be ſo diſintereſted, as neither to be influenced by eye-witneſſes, nor by the proſpect of reward.

" EXAMINE yourſelves on this head; and if your ſenſations unfortunately contradict your profeſſion, take ſhame to yourſelves, and know that you are no better than hypocrites, as to perſonal courage. It is the inward motive, not the outward appearance, which ſtamps a value upon actions: if in taking up arms we have more regard to our own intereſt, than to that of our country, and if, under a pretence of defending the rights of our King and nation, we think only of enriching

enriching ourſelves, we only wear the habit, without having any portion of the ſpirit of a ſoldier. Many indeed have been found acting only under the influence of avarice and pride, at the very time that they ſignalized themſelves externally by the moſt ſpecious conduct. But the true ſoldier deſires no other recompence, than the pleaſure of doing his duty; no other witneſs than his own conſcience; he is juſt as ready to die in a crowd, wherein he will be mixed with the multitude, as to fall, diſtinguiſhed in a ſingle combat. CON. III.

"THIS confidence is the effect of religion; which purifies the intentions, and influences the will, and is the ſchool of true magnanimity: without the motives which

CON. III. religion offers, nothing is to be ſeen but the ſhadow of virtue. Whoever is actuated by ſelf-intereſt, ſhould take care to conceal the principle on which he is acting: for the world, corrupt as it is, is not yet accuſtomed to applaud thoſe actions, which have no better principle than pride and covetouſneſs.

" You are deſcended from a line of anceſtors, whom your country ranks in the number of her heroes; their blood circulated in their veins for no other purpoſe, than that it might be ready to be ſhed, in order to oppoſe the miſchiefs which the enemy deviſed againſt the ſtate. With the price of their blood they purchaſed thoſe honours which you inherit; and of which you then only

only properly avail yourſelves, when you imitate their virtues. Nobility is loſt in the eye of reaſon and integrity, when it only ſerves to encourage us in pride and luxury, and give us an air of arrogance and diſdain. CON. III.

"IT is a certain indication of a weak and an ungenerous mind, to imagine that a title gives us a right to deſpiſe the reſt of mankind, and to do whatever our paſſions may ſuggeſt to us. Nobility is at once both a recompence for paſt ſervices done to our country, and an engagement by which the party ſo diſtinguiſhed binds himſelf to excel not leſs in the dignity of his ſentiments, and the ſuperiority of his virtues, than in his rank and ſituation in the world.

"You

CON. III. "You can never therefore properly reflect on your noble birth, without being touched with a ſenſe of the duties which it requires of you. If your country gives you credit on account of your anceſtors, you ought to exert yourſelves to the utmoſt to diſcharge the debt, and do honour to their memory. From the firſt moment of your being, the world has expected that you ſhould be as great as your progenitors, and it is your duty to anſwer theſe expectations; otherwiſe, the artiſan or the labourer will ſurpaſs you in the eyes of your country, and your titles and honours will only ſerve to make you contemptible.

"THE preſent age is not ſo barbarous, as to be ignorant, that all men

men are naturally equal; that all ought equally to labour; and that, if ſome are by the favour of their country diſtinguiſhed above others, it is only with a deſign to hold them up as patterns to the reſt of mankind. It is right, that there ſhould be, in every kingdom, perſons particularly called upon to vindicate the rights of honour and virtue: when we would kindle emulation in the minds of men, we muſt exhibit to them examples worthy of their imitation. What a ridiculous miſtake then is it, to ſuppoſe that we only receive the title of nobility, as an encouragement to licentiouſneſs and pride? CON. III.

"IT is not a little pleaſing to find one's ſelf, in the midſt of ſo many different ranks and orders of men,

CON. III. men, patircularly called upon to ſupport the character of generoſity and valour. This pleaſure is certainly worth all the trouble of expoſing our ſelves to any dangers, difficulties, or inconveniencies to which our profeſſion may be liable. True greatneſs conſiſts in being ready to reſign our claim to that honour which we well deſerve; and in generouſly reſolving never to be wanting to our King and country, whatever we may be expoſed to, in the diſcharge of our duty. When you make your entrance on the theatre of the world, you muſt expect to be an eye-witneſs of the various ſcenes which it exhibits; and think, with *Marcus Aurelius*, that there is no part, however tragical, which you may not at one time or other be called upon to perform.

CON. III.

"THE more attentive you are to your duty, the more you will be expoſed to invidious cenſure: but it is then that you muſt ſeek for comfort in your own mind. Only make a point of doing what you ought, and then, whatever injury you ſuſtain, you will never be greatly diſconcerted. For this alſo is a proof of real magnanimity, to be ſuperior to all events; nay, in ſome caſes, even to hazard our reputation, while we are doing what we are convinced is right. It was thus, that *Fabius* conducted himſelf; never altering his meaſures, notwithſtanding the murmurs occaſioned by the ſlow caution with which he acted. It is by no means impoſſible that calumny and ingratitude ſhould be the recompence of your

CON. III. your ſervices; but this you will utterly diſregard, whilſt your conſcience bears witneſs that you have diſcharged your duty: virtue is equally ſuperior both to the ſmiles and to the frowns of fortune.

"THE reaſon why ſo many perſons are found diſaffected towards government, is, becauſe their patriotiſm is really founded in ambition; they conſider only themſelves, while they pretend to have nothing in view but the public good: and the leaſt diſappointment of their hopes ſets them to railing againſt the conſtitution, and determines them no longer to ſtand forth in the ſervice of their country. May ſuch ſentiments as theſe never enter into your minds! May the public welfare ſo engroſs your attention,

attention, as to make you regardleſs of your own! No man can ever be eſteemed poor, who can boaſt of the advantage of being ſerviceable to the nation to which he belongs. CON. III.

"OBSERVE with what reſolution the common ſoldier ruſhes into the battle; who has no expectation of being diſtinguiſhed by a triumph, or of enlarging his fortune by conqueſt: he has nothing to expect but death: learn from him, that it is your duty to perform whatever is required of you with firmneſs, without conſidering what may be the conſequence to yourſelf in particular.

"BUT to whatever advantage that perſon may appear, who is taught by his profeſſion only to eſtimate his life by the pleaſure of ſacrificing

CON. III. ſacrificing it, whenever his duty calls upon him to do it, yet will the brightneſs of his glory be entirely ſullied, if he is led to deſpiſe other ranks of men on the compariſon. He ought to be told, that our country is a body, which hath equal need of all its members; all of which co-operate in different ways for the general benefit. The ſtrength of a kingdom would be very ſoon exhauſted, if it could only be maintained by the ſword. The ploughſhare of the huſbandman, and the inſtrument of the loweſt mechanick, are the honorable means of ſerving their country; ſuch perſons cannot therefore be deſpiſed, without degrading humanity itſelf.

" I am not here ſpeaking of ma- CON. III.
giſtrates or clergymen; you have no need to be told, that theſe functions (the one employed to preſerve an intercourſe betwixt heaven and earth, the other to maintain the peace and good order of families) are ſacred and venerable; and that it is a mark of ignorance or folly in either to be inſenſible of their own dignity or utility. How many of both theſe orders of men ſpend their whole lives in the diſcharge of their reſpective duties! They die with leſs eclat, I allow, than he who falls in the field of battle; but their death is ſo much more precious in the ſight of God, as it continued almoſt during their whole life; every moment of which was a kind of diminution of themſelves,

CON. III. through the continual waſting of their health and vigour.

" THE generality of men, looking on perſons of diſtinction, ſee nothing but what ſerves to flatter their vanity, and excite the envy of their inferiors. But theſe are only ſuperfluities, with which a mind that is really great can never be affected: it is right that our country ſhould have rewards to beſtow, and it is natural for us to be pleaſed with receiving them; but we then ſhew they are unworthily beſtowed upon us, whenever we ſuffer them to miniſter to pride or luxury. Better were it to live in poverty and obſcurity, than to apply our riches and honours to the purpoſes of vanity. The more favours you have received from the hands of your country,

country, the more ought you to ſtudy to be affable, modeſt, and induſtrious, in return for ſuch diſtinctions; otherwiſe, you will expoſe her to the cenſures of the invidious, whoſe wiſdom in diſtinguiſhing you, you are engaged to vindicate by an exemplary conduct. CON. III.

" O! how few are there, who are ſenſible of theſe duties! No ſooner have men rendered any important ſervice to their country, and received the rewards of ſuch ſervices, but they give themſelves up to a diſhonourable ſloth, or to an exceſs of pleaſure. They wiſh to make amends for the time, which they have paſſed in labour and fatigue; without reflecting that the ſeaſons of honourable toil are the happieſt moments of our life; and

CON. III. that eternity will be long enough for repoſe."

HERE the pious mother, having made a ſign to her ſon to ſtop, ſaid with a weak voice:

"IT is time for us to finiſh this lecture: a vaſt field for reflection here opens itſelf to your view, if you are capable of drawing thoſe concluſions, which preſent themſelves to the mind. The wiſdom of your father, you ſee, enabled him to find means of inſtructing you, even after his death: for my part, who have not his underſtanding and knowledge, I have nothing to offer you but tenderneſs and affection; which indeed is ſo great, as to make me inſenſible of my ſufferings, that you may not be left a prey to ignorance and paſſion.

However

CON. III.

However weak my abilities may be, and however limited my apprehenſion of things, I ſhall continue to communicate my thoughts to you on whatſoever ſubject I think may be of uſe to any of you; your father's excellent inſtructions being chiefly confined to the military life. My only prayer is, that my ſtrength may be ſpared ſo long, as to give me an opportunity of accompliſhing my deſign: I ſhall then cloſe my eyes, and reſign myſelf into the hands of death, with as little reluctance, as I would retire to ſleep.

CONFERENCE IV.

On SOCIAL DUTIES.

CON. IV. HAVING by the help of your father's invaluable manuſcript inſtructed you in your duty to your country, I ſhall now proceed to thoſe obligations which you owe to ſociety. Affection ſupplies me with freſh ſpirits, and I willingly forget my own weakneſs, when your happineſs is concerned: my phyſicians indeed would fain diſſuade me from ſuch exertions of myſelf; but their apprehenſions only ſerve to quicken my zeal to diſcharge that office, which love and duty towards you inſpire.

THOUGH

CON. IV.

THOUGH young, you already know enough of the world, to be ſenſible that there are connections ſuited to every condition of life. And that, to confound the diſtinction betwixt each of theſe, would be equally contrary to the rules of decency and diſcretion. In your choice of companions, regard muſt be paid to age, profeſſion, and fortune. This diſtinction is not the effect of ſcrupulous vanity, but the fruit of a wiſe diſcernment.

WHAT would you think of a man of quality who ſhould only aſſociate with the vulgar? Would you not juſtly conſider him as a contemptible character, and as one who had forfeited the privileges of his birth and education? Providence has appointed diverſities of

CON. IV. rank and condition, which we cannot confound without a violation of its laws: the circumſtances of your birth were intended to teach you, that you ſhould connect yourſelves chiefly with perſons of your own rank, or at leaſt with thoſe who diſtinguiſh themſelves by the worthineſs of their ſentiments. A ſimilitude of manners, and of inclinations is the only ſure foundation of friendſhip among men.

SOCIAL intercourſe is not an arbitrary commerce with each other, with which we are at liberty to diſpenſe, *as* we will, and *when* we will: the ſeveral claſſes into which men are divided, are mutually bound to ſhew reſpect, and friendſhip and good will to one another. If regard is paid to your rank, you muſt

must, on your part, honour your superiors: this distinction serves to maintain harmony in the world, and forms that interchange of true politeness, which cannot be too nicely preserved. CON. IV.

HE who is really well-bred will shew respect to his instructors, complaisance to his equals, and condescension to his inferiors: he will endeavour to accommodate himself to different characters and circumstances; you will never see such a one running from one company to another, to carry tales, to broach new opinions, or to slander persons behind their backs. Always obliging, always a friend to truth, he well knows how to reconcile his language with his heart; and never says a word, which

CON. IV. which is inconſiſtent with decency or politeneſs; he is utterly unacquainted with the art of ſetting himſelf off at the expence of another: if he chuſes to indulge a vein of humour, it is only in ridiculing the follies of the age, without any perſonal reflections; if he chuſes to moralize, it is in ſo pleaſing a manner, that at once he both delights and perſuades.

THE ſafety as well as enjoyment of ſociety would be at an end, if every libertine might freely utter his obſcenities, and every Atheiſt his blaſphemies; but good manners are a ſecurity againſt ſuch offenſive diſcourſe, and even the moſt abandoned is obliged in ſpight of himſelf, to conceal his vices, and aſſume the appearance of virtue.

It

It is only in particular companies, equally reprobated by decency and good ſenſe, that we are inſulted by filthy jeſts, and the palm of wit is aſſigned to thoſe who ridicule religion and its miniſters: ſuch company as this you ought never to be made acquainted with: true merit ſeeks a more advantageous reſidence, than in ſuch ſociety as this. Whatever reſpect you may think due to the different kinds of people with whom you aſſociate, take care that you purchaſe not the company of others at too dear a price. They have never rightly eſtimated what is due to ſocial life, who ſacrifice their time, their liberty, and their virtue to it.

SUCH as divide their whole time betwixt dreſs and amuſements, are a ſort of beings which merely exiſt, and

CON. IV. and who, under a pretence of rendering themſelves uſeful to the public, only think of gratifying their pride, and diſſipating chagrin. It is impoſſible to be at reſt in our own minds, when we give ourſelves up to the hurry of the world; private friendſhip muſt not be ſupported at our country's expence: to the latter we owe much more than to the former, we muſt not therefore ſacrifice the one, out of too much complaiſance for the other. If there are ſome men who do nothing, it is becauſe they have no proper ſenſe of their duty to God, or to their country. Complaiſance degenerates into weakneſs, when we have not reſolution enough to reſiſt the importunities of an artful woman, or the ſolicitations of an idle

idle man: only make a point of being conſtantly well employed, and you will eaſily get rid of this ſort of perſecution. CON. IV.

THE greateſt miſchief is, when we do not diſtinguiſh betwixt the faſhion of the world, and the duties which we owe to ſociety; whereas there is a wonderful difference between them. The one engages us in a train of fooliſh expences, vicious intrigues, and a round of unprofitable idleneſs; the other makes us uſeful and friendly, and offers to us only thoſe amuſements which are innocent and proper.

A ſociable man is really a friend to his country; a man of the world (in the ſenſe in which we have juſt now conſidered him) would ſacrifice his country to his intereſt and his

CON. IV. his pleaſures. When this attachment to the world has taken poſſeſſion of the heart, its votaries only exiſt for the ſake of gratification, and what dependence can there be on a mind that is ſubject to the tyranny of pleaſure?

HE, who attends to the duties which he owes to ſociety, is like a ſtream, which diffuſes itſelf through a beautiful meadow; but he, who gives himſelf up to the world, is like a torrent, which haſtens to empty itſelf into the ſea: in the one we diſcover nothing but delight, in the other nothing but noiſe and violence. The love of ſociety conſtitutes a part of our duty; the love of the world makes us forgetful of every duty. I have been too well acquainted with this dangerous world,

world; and it is becauſe I fooliſhly confounded it with ideas of ſociety, that I am at preſent ſo well able to diſtinguiſh betwixt them. Alas! I thought once there was no being ſociable, without being preſent at every entertainment, at every play, and at every aſſembly; and I had ſo thoroughly reconciled myſelf to this notion, that I ſhould have looked upon any one, as the moſt ſtupid and unſociable of all creatures, that did not readily concur with me in my ideas. So powerful is the love of pleaſure, that it puts a falſe interpretation upon every thing, and aſſumes the language of folly inſtead of that of reaſon. CON. IV.

THIS deluſion, one of the ſtrongeſt that can be imagined among perſons of a certain rank, makes

CON. IV. makes them attach themſelves to the world, without ſcruple or reſerve: they doat upon it, under the pretext of being ſociable; and they perſuade themſelves that the unprofitable toil which it impoſes, is a duty which it is neceſſary for them to perform.

IT is my earneſt deſire that my own paſt imprudence ſhould prove uſeful to *you*; and that you would not make *ſociety* conſiſt in any thing, but what it really is; that is to ſay, in a polite intercourſe, which unites us to each other;—in friendly viſits, which cannot be diſpenſed with;—in letters of civility, which we ought to write;—and in that neceſſary familiarity, which we mutually ſtand in need of for the purpoſes of relaxation: all beyond this,

this, deſerves not the name of *ſociety*. CON. IV.

AFTER determining what it is to be really and properly ſociable, it is neceſſary for us to know how we ought to conduct ourſelves in the company of others. Many rules have been laid down upon this ſubject; and they are plainly reducible to theſe: never to ſpeak, but to the purpoſe: never to rally but with good humour: never to appear ſupercilious: never to indulge caprice: never to ſhew any thing inconſiſtent with a good heart. Strokes of humour may pleaſe for a moment; but good ſenſe is always agreeable, and always gives ſatisfaction: we cannot endure that which lets us down; and therefore we are much better pleaſed with him who only ſays common things,

CON. IV. than with him whoſe turn of converſation is of a ſuperior kind; nature is always preferable to art.

LEARN to make uſe of your wit without ſhewing that you are vain of it; the leſs you affect to ſhew it, the more admirers you will find, and the more friends. Equally avoid both raillery and flattery; the one is always conſidered as ill-nature, the other paſſes for deceit: in former times it was neceſſary to praiſe in the moſt extravagant terms, in order to attract a ſmile, or even a gracious look: the ladies of the preſent age know how ridiculous ſuch commendations are; and rather than be diſguſted by flattery, they wiſh never to be complimented at all. If you are ſo happy as to have a grave and ſtudious turn, you will find

find fewer of theſe leſſer duties on your hands. All thoſe important trifles, which the world calls little attentions (tho' abſolutely neceſſary within proper limits) ſeem in their extreme to belong only to *Petits Maîtres*; becauſe every thing that is inſignificant is ſuited to that character. You are undone, if ever you propoſe ſuch as theſe for your examples: I never ſaw one of them, whoſe mind was not utterly ruined by his folly: they are fit only to afford diverſion, and they always do it at their own expence. When the arrival of one of theſe gentry is announced, only by the ſcent of amber and muſk, and when he brings nothing with him but impertinence, it is impoſſible that any man of ſenſe can be pleaſed with ſuch company.

CON. IV.

CON. IV. IT is by good manners and a genteel air, that others are prepoſſeſſed in our favour: every man has ſo much ſelf-love, as to oppoſe him, who wiſhes to trample upon thoſe about him: we love to ſee the charms of ſweetneſs in a modeſt countenance: while you are poſſeſſed of theſe graces, my children, all the world will admire you. It is not neceſſary, in order to be ſociable, that you be eloquent, or witty, or poſſeſſed of any rare or ſuperior talents; all that ſociety demands of you is, that you be complaiſant without meanneſs, polite without flattery, ſteady without rudeneſs, and ſprightly without affectation: ſhe requires that you cultivate her, as the friends of mankind; and that you do her honour by an unblemiſhed reputation,

reputation, by decency in your words, and purity in your morals. CON. IV.

A farther knowlege of the world will teach you many particulars, on which my weakneſs will not ſuffer me to enlarge; it will furniſh you with that gracefulneſs, that eaſe in your carriage, that politeneſs, that propriety of behaviour, which ought to diſtinguiſh a perſon of faſhion: it will ſhew you the neceſſity of not publiſhing ſtories without caution, of not judging of any performances but with modeſty; and of not ſpeaking of your neighbour, but with reſerve: it will teach you that you ought to be neither the firſt to ſet the faſhion, nor the laſt to leave it; and in ſhort, that you cannot too carefully avoid the imputation of needleſs ſingularity.

CON. IV.

BE careful not to ſlight any perſon; yet let your attentions be properly regulated: nothing is more improper, than to treat a ſtranger with the intimacy of a friend; or an intimate friend with the diſtance due to a ſuperior: diſtinguiſh merit wherever you find it, without troubling yourſelf about the garb in which it appears: court the company of the learned, and the converſation of the aged; their diſcourſe is often more uſeful, than any book that you can read. Never argue on a ſubject which you do not underſtand; every one admires modeſty; no one can endure conceit. If you are deſired to play for mere amuſement, do not decline it; but never play for the ſake of gain: if you are unlucky, you will loſe

loſe with good humour, when the ſtake is a matter of indifference: he that cannot command his temper never fails to diſcover his weakneſs, and gives offence to every one about him. Treat the other ſex with the utmoſt delicacy; it has a claim to the greateſt attention: avoid intrigues; have a ſtrict regard to modeſty, and you will never have a quarrel with any female. CON. IV.

NEVER promiſe any thing without deliberation; but having made a promiſe, implicitly obſerve it: whoever joins the firſt party that comes in his way, without regarding a prior engagement, does not deſerve to have friends: let diſcretion conſtantly direct your conduct: and if, notwithſtanding all theſe precautions, you ſhould meet with enemies,

CON. IV. enemies, they, and not you, will be to be blamed.

THE more attention you appear to ſhew to theſe inſtructions, my children, the more dear you muſt neceſſarily be to me; and the leſs I ſhall lament the ſad ſeparation which death is preparing to make betwixt us: In leaving you well ſtored with good principles, and furniſhed with my beſt advice, I ſhall think I only loſe you in part; and that I ſhall be always in ſome degree in the midſt of you; it is thus you will be able to find me in your own minds, when you can no longer ſee or hear me; and I truſt you will there find me faithfully repreſented.

CON-

CONFERENCE V.

On VIRTUE.

CON. V.

A SUCCESSION of fainting fits had exceedingly weakened this pious mother; but, by an exertion worthy of her virtue and magnanimity, ſhe ſeemed to forget her bodily weakneſs, that ſhe might fully expreſs the dictates of her heart. Her children, full of attention, and impreſſed with the utmoſt tenderneſs, looked upon her with a mixture of admiration and grief, while ſhe communicated this valuable leſſon of inſtruction on the ſubject of virtue.

VIRTUE

CON. V.

VIRTUE, my children, ought to be the ruling principle of all your actions: I cannot but conſider her as the offspring of heaven, without whom there would be nothing in this world but iniquity and impurity. In vain have the moſt corrupt ages of men endeavoured to obſcure her brightneſs: ſhe forces her way through the thickeſt cloud of paſſions, diffuſing thoſe rays of glory, which we never can ſufficiently admire: even her enemies are compelled to praiſe her; and even thoſe who are wicked, if not utterly abandoned, would fain be accounted virtuous.

BUT it is not ſufficient to bear our teſtimony in favour of virtue in empty words; we muſt do her honour by a conduct which is irreproachable.

proachable. The eulogium which we outwardly beſtow upon her, muſt be confirmed by the inward diſpoſitions of the heart. CON. V.

You will never be truly great, but in proportion as you are virtuous: the higheſt honours are no more than the pedeſtal; but merit is the ſtatue erected upon it. This it is which diſtinguiſhes an individual from the multitude; this it is which renders him ſuperior to all that birth and fortune can beſtow. Our talents do us honour; and wit gains us credit; but virtue exalts us even above humanity; raiſing us above the events of life, and even above ourſelves; with her, we ſecure the admiration of poſterity; we live in the annals of hiſtory; we never die; without her, on the contrary,

CON. V. contrary, we are degraded, we grovel, we only exiſt, to the diſhonour of humanity.

THOUGH ſhe has flouriſhed above 4000 years, ſhe is not yet grown old: we ſpeak of her, as if the great effects of her power were manifeſted even to this day: the *Romans* are preſent with us, as though they were but juſt now dead; we ſeem as it were eye-witneſſes of their glory, and magnanimity; ſo true is it, that . . .

HERE ſhe was obliged to break off her diſcourſe, that ſhe might not ſink under her extreme weakneſs; and ſhe had only juſt ſtrength enough left to tell her children, who were melted into tears, that ſhe muſt defer the remainder 'till another day.

CON-

CONFERENCE VI.

Farther inſtructions on the ſame ſubject.

FOUR days had now paſſed, within which this excellent lady had not been able to converſe with her children; but happily her ſufferings abated, and ſhe now renewed her inſtructions. CON. VI.

You ſee me, ſays ſhe, reſtored to you for a little time; and it is with the greateſt ſatisfaction I avail myſelf of this ſhort reſpite, from the pleaſing hope of rendering the few remaining hours of my life as uſeful to you as poſſible. Virtue, of which I was ſpeaking, in my laſt conference with you, is ſo fruitful

CON. VI. a field, that one might compoſe large volumes upon this ſubject. O! that I were able to repreſent her to you ſurrounded with that peace which is peculiar to her, adorned with thoſe charms which diſtinguiſh her, ſupported by that true greatneſs, which is her characteriſtick! You would ſee that ſhe was formed to be the empreſs of the univerſe; that ſhe alone deſerves our regard; that her ſublime perfections would have altars erected in every heart, if man were not a dupe to his paſſions; the higher ſhe is raiſed, the more modeſt is her deportment; the more charms ſhe poſſeſſes, the more ſtudious is ſhe to conceal them.

IN vain doth vice oppoſe her attractions, and declare open war againſt

againſt her: the remorſe, which diſturbs the ſoul of every ſinner, comes to avenge her cauſe, and to teach us that there is no happineſs, but what is found in the poſſeſſion of virtue. Attach yourſelves therefore cloſely to her, and you will find that the perfection of happineſs conſiſts in the enjoyment of her: I never knew what real pleaſure was, 'till I became acquainted with the worth of virtue, and the greatneſs of her beauty: as a proof of this, my deareſt children, I can with truth aſſure you, that notwithſtanding I am on all ſides ſurrounded with the ſhadow of death, I feel an inward joy which I am not able to expreſs. This is the preſent happy effect of my love for virtue, which has taken ſuch poſſeſſion of my CON. VI.

CON. VI. my heart, that nothing can materially affect me, which hath not ſome relation to *her*; even you are only ſo far dear to me, as I truſt you will prove really good and virtuous.

THIS diſpoſition, however, is the gift of God, and cannot be derived from ourſelves alone; it is therefore the ſubject of my conſtant prayers that you may be filled with that grace, which I have ſo often and ſo earneſtly implored for myſelf: no one will be richer than you, if you are in poſſeſſion of this treaſure; you can then be placed in no ſituation of life, in which you will not diſtinguiſh yourſelves by ſome laudable action. In each of you, the indigent will find a beneficent father; your family, an equitable

equitable and kind maſter; your relations, an affectionate and generous friend; your country, a zealous ſupporter; your King, a moſt faithful ſubject; in ſhort, all men will conſider you as their brethren, who only live to comfort and aſſiſt them. CON. VI.

WHAT a bleſſing will riches and honours prove in your hands, if you are really virtuous! You will then become a ſource of comfort perpetually flowing to communicate happineſs to all mankind.

YOUR favour will be implored as though ye were, in ſome degree, the miniſters of heaven; and men will bleſs you, as doing honour to the age and nation in which you live.

CON. VI. VIRTUE is far from being unrewarded even in this life. What a ſatisfaction do we feel, on awaking from ſleep, that we have it in our will, and in our power to diſtinguiſh the approaching day, by ſome ſingular act of mercy to the wretched! How are we delighted with ſuch ſentiments as theſe! What tranſport doth the combination of ſuch virtues afford! Theſe are the never-failing attendants on good men.

You muſt however beware of confounding natural diſpoſition with the dictates of virtue: we often miſtake conſtitutional firmneſs for heroic magnanimity: vivacity of temper produces courage, as phlegm occaſions prudence. We can only know, by a ſtrict enquiry into

into ourſelves, the true motive on which we act. If it is really virtue which excites us, there will be neither affectation, nor ſeverity: ſimplicity and moderation will every where appear: they who carry things to an extreme, know not, that even wiſdom itſelf muſt be tempered with ſobriety. CON. VI.

I am not fond of thoſe outrageous virtues, which certain enthuſiaſts recommend as the characteriſticks of human perfection. True virtue only ſhews herſelf by a moſt obliging deportment: the more gracious her air is, the more ſtrongly ſhe engages our attachment: we are offended at the ſight of a countenance which is overſpread with a cloud of ſeverity.

CON. VI. TAKE care then to exhibit nothing in your outward behaviour but what is truly amiable; for otherwiſe you will diſfigure virtue, and make her appear different from what ſhe really is: all that we add of our own is only an alloy unworthy of her purity. It is our misfortune that there is too great a want of ſincerity amongſt us: accuſtomed from our infancy to diſſemble, we think nothing excellent but what is diſguiſed; however there is no virtue where there is not truth.

LAY this down as a maxim, and you will deteſt every ſpecies of diſſimulation; there is nothing more odious, than a mind enſlaved to falſehood, a heart in which duplicity prevails. It is better to ſpeak the

the truth, tho' it ſhould prove to our own hurt, than to make uſe of the leaſt equivocation to gain the greateſt advantage. CON. VI.

ALL the riches in the world are not worth one ſingle virtue: ſo that if you were allowed to make your choice betwixt the wealth which you are to be poſſeſſed of, and the virtues which I have recommended to you to practiſe, you ought not to heſitate a moment, whether of theſe you ſhould prefer: a man who is truly virtuous can never be really diſtreſt: he finds in himſelf thoſe rich reſources, which even princes are unable to beſtow: always eaſy, and well ſatisfied, he does not find his mind agitated with the viciſſitudes of fortune; his thoughts are raiſed above the ſufferings of the preſent

CON. VI. preſent life, to the joys of a much happier ſtate; and the ſublimity of his ſentiments renders him ſuperior to all the calamities, which fortune can inflict.

A ſoul in which virtue reſides is the neareſt repreſentation of heaven itſelf: all is ſerenity and light and joy: the troubles of the world cannot interrupt its repoſe, the cloud of paſſions cannot diminiſh its brightneſs.

RELIGION is the only ſolid foundation of morality: this wiſdom is the chief ornament of the human mind, and the chief director of our life. Without this, the heart is degraded, the whole ſoul is degenerate; we are diſſatisfied with ourſelves, and we have only fools or libertines for our companions and friends.

ASK any man who has preferred a vicious to a virtuous courſe of life, and if he is ſincere, he will acknowledge that his uneaſineſs was continual; that his joy was merely external; that his imagination was bewildered; that his paſſions conſumed him; that his actions brutalized him; and that his whole mind and body were exhauſted. CON. VI.

WE need not wait for the coming of that awful day, when God ſhall puniſh vice, to know how odious ſhe is: even in this life ſhe carries with her her own condemnation; her moſt eloquent and bold panegyriſts have never been able, with all their endeavours, to cover that deformity, which attends her, and always renders her the object of deteſtation. Go into any country that you pleaſe,

CON. VI. and you will find vice proſcribed and virtue honoured.

IN what ignominious terms doth hiſtory make mention of vicious princes? it ſpeaks of them with horror, and never ſo much as names them, but to make them odious to every age and nation.

A vicious man is a ſtranger to prudence, decency, and honeſty: he neither reads, nor ſpeaks, nor acts but with a view to gratify the violence of his paſſions, and bitterly to inveigh againſt virtue, which excites his indignation ſo much the more, as he finds it impoſſible to hate her.

I would not wiſh for more than the mere preſence of a libertine, to fill any reflecting mind with horror. He is a monſter, that deſtroys all the pleaſure of ſociety, that ſtifles every

every worthy ſentiment, that rebels againſt every law of reaſon, and that defies Heaven itſelf with a ſhocking and intolerable inſolence. CON. VI.

FROM ſuch dreadful exceſſes as theſe, virtue, my dear children, will preſerve you: She will not only remove you at a diſtance from every ſinful act, but alſo from every occaſion of ſinning; ſhe will inſpire you with an utter averſion from thoſe preſumptuous offenders, whoſe very breath is infectious; ſhe will encourage you to your ſeveral duties; ſhe will prove the beſt ſecurity againſt idleneſs, which is juſtly eſteemed the parent of every kind of wickedneſs.

THERE is no circumſtance in life, wherein virtue will not be found uſeful, as there is none in which

CON. VI. which vice can be excuſed. This religious principle will make us patient in adverſity; humble in proſperity; prudent in buſineſs; moderate in pleaſures; undaunted in dangers; affable in converſation; judicious in the management of our domeſtick concerns. A man is always acting amiſs, when he is not virtuous; his conduct is a ſatire againſt himſelf; and he finds only mean and baſe minds, that will venture to applaud him.

WHILE we practice virtue, we belong, as it were, to Heaven: while we lead a diſorderly life, we are retained in the ſervice of our paſſions. The obſervance of our duty unites us with good men; the love of vice throws us into the company of the wicked.

THE

THE world will not fail to throw abundance of obſtacles in your way, to hinder your approach to virtue; but theſe difficulties will preſently vaniſh, whenever you enter into an examination of your own hearts; you will then find, that it is impoſſible to be truly good, without all thoſe qualities, which religion demands; you will then find, that the inconſtancy of the human mind has need to be fixed by the authority of wiſdom and juſtice. CON. VI.

THE vivacity of youth is too apt to form a falſe idea of religion, as throwing a veil of melancholy over the world and all its pleaſures; but ſuch young people are greatly mistaken; wiſdom and goodneſs are very conſiſtent with, if they are not indeed the only ſource of, chearfulneſs.

CON. VI. neſs. If you look into the world, and attend carefully to the actions of men, you will find true enjoyment only among thoſe who are really virtuous; others indeed may *appear* with more noiſy jollity about them; but this is only a kind of intemperate exceſs, which in a few moments will give place to an invincible melancholy. When a man is only joyous by fits and by compulſion, the heart remains a prey to diſſipation and remorſe.

IF what I have ſaid to you in recommendation of virtue is not ſufficient to determine you in favour of her charms, recall to your minds your excellent father, review the hiſtory of your illuſtrious anceſtors! and by no means diſhonour their memory by a conduct ſo widely different

different from their's. The life which you derive from them, ſhould paſs as uncorrupt as theirs; you ought to bear their name, only that you may ſhew to poſterity, that you are ſo many living repreſentatives of their virtues. CON. VI.

I flatter myſelf my admonitions will not eaſily be effaced; and that you will ſtudy that moderation in all things, which conſtitutes true wiſdom: your minds will never be truly great, except whilſt, being ſteady without boldneſs, prudent without avarice, liberal without profuſion, you ennoble every action of your lives. Take heed that you do not even in ſecret diveſt yourſelves of that prudence and caution which you outwardly profeſs; you muſt never forget, that

CON. VI. that you ought to be virtuous, for the ſake of virtue, and for the ſake of heaven; a truly good man is he who always acts, as if his whole conduct was open to the ſight and examination of God and men.

CONFERENCE VII.

On PLEASURE.

AS God, my dear children, is pleaſed to prolong my life, only to enable me to continue my inſtructions to you, I ſhall take this opportunity of dwelling more at large on the ſubject of pleaſure, the chief rock againſt which you are in danger of ſplitting. Youth is the ſeaſon, in which pleaſures preſent themſelves to the imagination to ſeduce and captivate it: they begin by dazzling our ſight, and when once they have ſucceeded in this point, they ſoon aſſume the empire of the heart; there they eſtabliſh CON. VII.

CON. IV.

eſtabliſh their dominion, and choke every ſeed of virtue.

As ſoon as the inordinate love of pleaſure takes poſſeſſion of the ſoul, virtue is obliged to retire; we are thenceforth wholly taken up with ſuch objects as gratify the paſſions, cheriſh effeminacy, and ſupport vanity: we ſeek for nothing but miſchievous indulgencies, we liſten only to the dictates of our ſenſual appetites.

THERE is no man who is not fond of eaſe and tranquility; it is ſo deeply imprinted in our minds, that we muſt diveſt ourſelves of our nature, before we can think otherwiſe: but by tranquility of mind, we mean that pure ſatisfaction, which has nothing in common with thoſe gratifications, in which the world

world chiefly delights: for you cannot be too often told, that the pleaſures which it purſues, as its ſovereign good, are only phantoms which miſlead us. CON. VII.

I am no ſtranger to theſe boaſted delights: I have been ſufficiently engaged in their vain purſuit; and from my own experience I can with truth declare, that they only ſerve to lull reaſon to ſleep: it is, in ſhort, a ſtate of ſtupefaction, which terminates in remorſe; a dream, from which when we awake, we find a *vacuum* which we are not able to ſupply. I always fancied that they would fill my heart with the moſt perfect joy, and I found myſelf conſtantly diſappointed.

THOUGH the ſoul drink ever ſo largely of this cup, it never finds that

CON. VII. that inward ſatisfaction, which leaves nothing farther to be deſired: we never can be completely happy, whilſt we are under the government of our paſſions.

IF I had time and ability to analyze thoſe pleaſures to which the world is enſlaved, I could demonſtrate to you the inſufficiency of public diverſions and amuſements to give real ſatisfaction to a rational mind: it is ſufficient to know that they are trifling, that they are fatiguing, that they are tranſient; whereas the ſoul can find no real happineſs in that which is not ſubſtantial, peaceful, and unchangeable: we always therefore offer violence to our better part, when we launch forth into that tumultuous ocean of trifles, which conſtitute the

the life of people of faſhion. It is only by ſtifling reflection, that the lovers of pleaſure can ſupport themſelves: they well know, that a little ſerious conſideration would give them a diſtaſte for the pleaſures which they are purſuing, and therefore they do every thing they can to get rid of it. Thus do they live in a wilful ignorance even of their own minds. CON. VII.

How often does the theatre, which we are fond of calling the ſchool of true politeneſs, and juſt ſentiments, carry us away from ourſelves, and render us the ſlaves of paſſion! It is always love, which performs the principal character, and which is repreſented in the moſt alluring manner: I never went to it in my life, without returning,

CON. VII. more enamoured with the world, more paſſionately fond of dreſs, more ſtrongly inclined to diſſipation. The glaring appearance of the ſtage, the ſentiments there delivered, and the objects exhibited, all ſerve to enchant the ſenſes, excite the paſſions, intoxicate the mind, and encourage the love of pleaſure.

THINK not I aſſume the language of a preacher, mine is only that of reaſon and experience. The theatre is very frequently the ruin of young men, whom the ſight of an actreſs ſeduces, and carries headlong into every ſpecies of miſchief: from that moment all domeſtic attachments are at an end; all relative duties are neglected; a total diſorder in their affairs ſucceeds, and they become the ſubject of public converſation,

ſation, and the authors of ruin to themſelves and to their families. CON. VII.

I defy the advocates for theſe entertainments to deny the facts, juſt mentioned. Alas! what I have ſaid is too frequently verified, to queſtion the truth of it. In vain are we told, that the tears which we ſhed in the theatre teach us to be compaſſionate; the momentary tenderneſs excited by romance never yet materially affected the heart: they who are juſt come from a ſcene, at which they were almoſt diſſolved into tears, could with dry eyes behold the wretch, who, in want of every comfort, implores their pity and relief.

ASSEMBLIES have ſo often proved the occaſions of intrigues and duels, that I cannot venture to recom-

CON. VII.

mend them to you: it is certainly very proper, that a young man of faſhion ſhould know how to introduce himſelf, at ſuch places; and particularly that he ſhould be able to dance gracefully; but it is alſo very neceſſary, that he ſhould know, that of all qualifications, dancing is the leaſt conſiderable; that a man of ſcience looks on it with an eye of pity; and that an officer ought neither too curiouſly to ſtudy it, nor too earneſtly engage in it; it is the property of perſons of a trifling character to be wholly occupied by trifles.

As to play, there is no ſpecies of it, which does not ſtand in need of ſome apology to excuſe it. At beſt, it ſhews a feebleneſs of mind, which is incapable of proper application,

cation, and occaſions a loſs of time, which it is impoſſible to redeem: you muſt never conſider it, but as a neceſſary recreation, and an act of civility which you owe to ſociety; but lay this down as a maxim, that the money which we win, ſeldom does us the leaſt good, and that the loſs of our money ſeldom fails to diſconcert us. CON. VII.

OF games of hazard I ſay nothing; they are ſo dangerous, that I am perſuaded you will moſt carefully avoid them: in theſe, men either loſe their reputation, or their fortune, or both; and however rich they may ſuppoſe themſelves, from the moment they commence gameſters, they can never inſure their being worth a ſhilling; a ſingle

CON. VII.

throw often reduces an opulent man to abſolute beggary.

I am, perhaps, wrong, in reckoning play in the number of pleaſures; it certainly has much more the appearance of ſtudy, than of recreation: the eyes fixed, the attention engroſſed, a deep ſilence, a reſtleſs inquietude ariſing from the fear of loſing, or the hopes of gain, exclude the moſt diſtant idea of pleaſure. This is the ſtate of all who loſe: they are full of care, they are full of complaints, they torment themſelves, and when they are ſeen *playing*, to ſay the truth, they do every thing but *play*.

As for feaſts, they are only our ordinary meals embelliſhed by elegance and a variety of meats, and may

may ſerve to remind us, that this body of ours is a ſlave, that has a great many wants to be ſupplied; and that all theſe kinds of food with which our vanity is fed, were originally deſigned merely for a remedy againſt death. It is a ſure indication of a degenerate mind, when any man makes his happineſs to conſiſt in the pleaſure of eating. CON. VII.

Do not imagine, my dear children, that I have the leaſt deſire of making you unſociable or moroſe: my intention is only to inſpire you with elevated ſentiments; to teach you the true value of things, that you may not miſtake tinſel for gold, but that you may uſe this world as not abuſing it; and that you may be aſſured, that a conſcientious diſcharge of your duty is the only ſource

CON. VII. ſource of real pleaſure; that to reach forth comfort to the miſerable gives the trueſt ſatisfaction; and furniſhes the mind with that enjoyment, which no entertainments or diverſions can afford.

CAN there be a more pitiable object than one, whoſe whole happineſs depends on a fox chace, a concert, or a play? Should either of theſe fail him, he is undone: or if by chance he ſhould be ſo circumſtanced as to be out of the reach of them, he is ſo miſerable, that his exiſtence is a burthen to him.

WHO, on the contrary, is more happy than he, who, furniſhed with the means of amuſing ſolitude, can ſit down and reliſh the pleaſures of reading and contemplation? Such a man

a man goes out into the world merely for recreation, and to discharge the duties which he owes to ſociety: he conſiders the public amuſements as incidental means of relaxation, but can never be induced to ſet his heart on ſuch uſeleſs trifles. CON. VII.

As your military life may often oblige you to live in countries very ill ſupplied even with common neceſſaries, you muſt accuſtom yourſelves to be well ſatisfied, wherever you are: in order to which, reflect, that the mind is the principal object, which deſerves your attention; and that if you cultivate the growth of virtue in your hearts, you will have within yourſelves a never failing ſource of ſatisfaction.

THE

CON. VII.

THE diverſions of the field are certainly amuſing; the charms of muſic are unqueſtionably great; but our attachment to either falls little ſhort of madneſs, if we ſuffer them to engroſs our whole time, or our beſt affections. It is temperance, which muſt give a reliſh even to our pleaſures; and which alone renders them worthy of a rational ſoul. When we would be always amuſed, we loſe the idea of amuſement; even what is moſt delicious becomes inſipid, by being conſtantly within our reach. Every thing grows dull to that heart, which is a prey to voluptuouſneſs; every unneceſſary refinement made uſe of to whet the appetite for pleaſure, produces a painful ſatiety; if you only conſider recreation, as the remedy

medy of fatigue, it will be very eaſy to find amuſement: ſtudied pleaſures are only for thoſe, whoſe appetites are in a manner exhauſted. CON. VII.

As you are now arrived at an age in which your paſſions begin to ſhew themſelves, guard with the utmoſt care againſt every thing which may corrupt your morals, or diſturb your tranquility. Youth is the torrid zone of life, and the love of women the ſource of inquietude and misfortunes: hiſtory abounds with inſtances of thoſe ravages which it is continually making: it preſents itſelf to us under the attractive idea of pleaſure; but it ſoon becomes a torment, which diſorders the imagination, diſtracts the mind, and tyrannizes over the heart.

WHOEVER

CON. VII.

WHOEVER is thoroughly ſubject to its power, is always ready to violate the moſt ſacred duties; he forgets his friends, his country, and his God: he ſees nothing but the object of his paſſion, he hearkens to nothing but the voice of his unbridled deſires.

IN this dreadful ſituation you will be ſure to find yourſelves, if you know not how to fill up your time in a proper manner. The paſſions muſt be ſubdued by the ſtubbornneſs of labour, and temptation muſt be reſiſted, by avoiding the occaſions of it: we are ſure of being loſt, whenever we ſeek for danger. The miſeries of luſt may be read in the very faces of thoſe, who give themſelves up to it. Nothing exhauſts and enervates like

like debauchery; it deſtroys at once the underſtanding and the health. CON. VII.

You will tell me, perhaps, that by my ſyſtem of morality *all* pleaſures are forbidden: No, my children; there are many recreations which virtue allows; and in which you will find ſufficient ſatisfaction, when you only ſeek them for the ſake of amuſement.

A ſocial game at cards, chearful converſation, an evening-walk, an intereſting book, a game at tennis, or a day's hunting, a dinner with your friends, and innocent mirth; theſe ſhould be your amuſements; and theſe will have charms enough, if you know the nature of true pleaſure; I mean that, which is not purchaſed with pain or remorſe;

CON. VII. morſe; and which leaving the mind at all times in the ſame eaſy ſtate, in which it found it, is under no apprehenſion of ſhame, nor fears the cenſures of mankind.

IF a libertine would venture to calculate all the difficulties and embaraſſments, which he is under, to diſguiſe his conduct from the eyes of men; and to conceal his ſhame from his parents or his friends, he would ſee that his life is a continual torment; and that the wretched privilege of ruining his conſtitution, and deſtroying his life, is purchaſed with endleſs vexations: in vain does he ſhelter himſelf from the reproaches of men; God ſees him and his crimes in the very moment of commiſſion; and they are written in

in that everlaſting book, in which all our actions are recorded. CAR. VII.

FREQUENTLY reflect, I beſeech you, on what I have ſaid, and you will find, that true ſatisfaction conſiſts only in an upright attention to your duty; a mind ſo compoſed will receive pleaſure even from the ſight of a flower beginning to diſcloſe its beauties, or from a murmuring ſtream; or even from viewing the formation of the ſmalleſt inſect. A reflecting mind improves every contemplation of the wonderful works of the creator; it finds numberleſs beauties in thoſe objects, which paſs unnoticed by perſons of a diſſipated turn.

WHAT delight does the proſpect of a flowery meadow afford to a mind unſullied by vice! What ſa-

CON. VII.

tisfaction does a tender and a virtuous heart feel from the conſcious ſenſe of a good action? Such as theſe are the pleaſures which I wiſh you to experience: we are always independent, when we have the reſources of entertainment within ourſelves. He who is always running about in ſearch of happineſs, ſeldom finds any thing more than the ſhadow of it.

LET your minds then open themſelves to the pleaſures which virtue offers to your acceptance; and think, that, as effeminacy is the parent of chagrin, you will no longer be able to ſupport yourſelves, than while you are fond of labour, and know how to diverſify it. This variety tends admirably to hinder diſtaſte; nothing being

ſo

ſo tedious as an uniform ſameneſs of employment. CON. VII.

WHILST you carefully avoid the company of libertines, I am ſure you will be ſafe; but if once you aſſociate with them, you will infallibly become a prey to vice: their converſation tends only to ſeduce, and their examples are infectious. Accuſtomed to receive, from the moſt admired authors, whatever can inſpire them with the love of pleaſure, they commend, extol, and recommend them wherever they go; as a cloud ſcatters hail or rain over every country through which it paſſes.

I am ſenſible that you have need of reſolution: but what is a man, that is driven about with every wind, and can be good with ſuch as are good, and a libertine with ſuch

CON. VII. as are diſſolute; in ſhort, that has no inclinations or purpoſe of his own? If you think my advice tends only to render your life melancholy, you will neither do juſtice to my affection, nor to my diſcernment: adopt the meaſures which I recommend, and you will very ſoon know by experience, that your happineſs is the only earthly object of my care, and that I am neither miſtaken in the end, nor in the means which I point out to you, of effecting it. The voice of a mother, ſo deeply intereſted as I am in your welfare, is not the voice of treachery: death approaching begins to open my eyes; and imparts to me new rays of light: it deſtroys indeed my bodily ſtrength, but it increaſes the powers

powers of my underſtanding; it redoubles my love of thoſe, whom I conſider as a part of myſelf, which will ſoon ſurvive me, and, as it were, ſecure to me a continuance on that earth, on which I ſhall no longer perſonally exiſt. CON. VII.

IF any thing can afford me comfort in death, it will be the confidence that you will conſcientiouſly obſerve my precepts. Promiſe me, therefore, my beloved children, with ſuch expreſſions as a ſenſe of duty will ſuggeſt, promiſe me on the truth of a ſoldier, whoſe word of honour is moſt ſacred, promiſe me that you will conform your lives to the rules which I have here laid down, and that you will not diſhonour my memory by an irregular and vicious conduct.

CON. VII.

HERE the children of our excellent mother caſt themſelves at her feet, and in the midſt of tears and ſighs proteſted, that their lives ſhould be exactly ſuch, as ſhe had marked out to them; and that they had rather die in her preſence, than make her ſuch promiſes, as they did not mean to perform. Each of them embraced her in the tendereſt manner; after which the generous parent finiſhed her conference by ſaying, in a ſteady but interrupted tone of voice:

I receive your proteſtation with the utmoſt comfort: I would make it known, that it might be a witneſs againſt you, if you ſhould ever counteract your own ſolemn engagements. The world, corrupt as it is, would then ſhew, that it has virtue

virtue enough to ſet itſelf againſt you, and vindicate my rights; but in ſo doing, I ſhould think I diſhonoured you by my unjuſt apprehenſions: only remember that no one, without God's aſſiſting grace, can attain to any thing that is good, and that you ſtand in need of ſuccour from heaven, to enable you to put in practice what you have promiſed. CON. VII.

CONFERENCE VIII.

On AMBITION.

CON. VIII. THIS evening ſhall be employed in finiſhing the manuſcript which your father left you; let us give it that attention which it deſerves.

THE love of honour being the paſſion of perſons of rank, and eſpecially of ſoldiers, it is very neceſſary that you ſhould be taught the beſt means of regulating it. If it has no bounds, it becomes an headſtrong vice, which is ready to ſacrifice families, provinces, and kingdoms, nay even the whole univerſe

to

to its own intereſt. Maſſacres, wars, depredations of every kind, take their riſe only from a falſe ambition; when this affection of the mind is improved into a ſyſtem, we no longer regard the law, our country, or our God. CON. VIII.

I have never been able to read the hiſtory of thoſe wretched people without horror, who to ſatisfy their inordinate deſires, have effected the utter ſubverſion of a whole nation, and feaſted their eyes and their hearts with the dreadful ſpectacle. They are monſters, which deſerved to have been ſtifled: hiſtory itſelf ought not to have tranſmitted their names to our remembrance. Immortality is the reward of virtue alone; as for wickedneſs it is worthy

CON. VIII. thy to be conſigned to that darkneſs, whence it proceeded.

THERE is a kind of ambition, which we call emulation, and which having nothing in its view but the public good, or its own advancement, according to the ſtricteſt rules of equity and honour, muſt needs be conſidered as a virtue: without this ſpecies of ambition, our faculties would be benumbed, our talents would remain buried; there would be no enterprize, or diſcovery in the world; men reduced to a level with the brute creation, would live without rule and without reaſon.

IT was the deſign of Providence that our own private intereſt ſhould be intimately connected with that

of

of the public; and that the general good ſhould be promoted by the exertion of each man's particular abilities. Every one ſeems to be labouring for himſelf; and yet this labour, tho' *ſelf* appears to be the immediate object, ſoon unites with the common maſs of induſtry; and thus is compoſed that uſeful body of men, who maintain the ſtrength and magnificence of the ſtate at the hazard of their lives, or by the ſweat of their brows. CON. VIII.

WE are no where forbidden to keep our own advancement in our view; but we are at all times required to prefer the good of the public before our private intereſt; and while we are leſs concerned about our own advantage, than about that of our country, we ſhall never

CON. VIII. never deſire any thing, but what is juſt and reaſonable. When either arrogance or avarice ſo far prevails, as to make us wiſh to appropriate to ourſelves the praiſes and rewards, which are not our due, we then become uſurpers, and ceaſe to be worthy citizens.

AMBITION is a paſſion which runs into every extreme: one while it debaſes him, who is enſlaved to it; at another time it exalts him above meaſure: it is the parent of pride on one hand, and of meanneſs on the other. Of this ſort are thoſe obſequious wretches, who bow themſelves at the feet of ſuch as are able to promote them, while they treat thoſe with contempt, from whom they have nothing to expect.

CON. VIII.

WE muſt be well acquainted with the ambitious, if we would be competent judges of the miſeries they endure: we ſhould then ſee what a variety of projects, what a ſucceſſion of uneaſineſſes fills their imagination; how their minds are diſtracted with hopes and fears; how continually they are deluded with the phantom of glory, which ſuddenly vaniſheth away; and which makes the ambitious man think himſelf perpetually on the brink of happineſs, without ever actually attaining to it. Scarce is one of his deſires gratified, when a ſecond preſents itſelf; his heart, like the veſſel of the *Danaides*, can never be filled; he is like another *Tantalus*, whoſe thirſt is never to be quenched.

CON. VIII.

quenched. What a lamentable ſtate is this!

WHETHER it is the deſign of Providence to ſtop the ambitious in his career, or whether he is exhauſted by his own deſires; I have ſeen a multitude of young people, hurried away by this paſſion, periſh in the midſt of their projects of grandeur and advancement. Alas! will there not be earth enough to ſupply us with a grave; and muſt we be inceſſantly reminded, that this life is ſo ſhort and tranſitory, that there is not time to form deſigns, and to ſee them executed!

IT ſhould ſeem that the honours with which men feed their imagination, muſt needs be eternal; and yet—a ſingle moment is ſufficient to

to put an end both to them and their poſſeſſors. The earth is covered with inſcriptions, which announce the tranſitory condition of human grandeur; we ſpend our whole lives in deſiring that promotion, at which we never arrive, or, at leaſt, not before the eve of death. Truly it was well worth our while to torment ourſelves night and day, about what is ſo full of uncertainty and of ſo ſhort duration! CON. VIII.

THERE is only one ſort of ambition which I can venture to recommend to you; that of imitating your anceſtors, and of ſerving your country with a zeal which nothing can diminiſh. In every thing elſe, let moderation ſet bounds to your deſires; he is worthy of every thing, who thinks he deſerves nothing.

THEY

CON. VIII. THEY who are continually complaining of the injuſtice done them, becauſe their merit is not properly attended to, are men of a moſt ignoble ſpirit: we adopt a very different language, when we feel in our minds that generoſity of ſentiments, which raiſes us above the caprice of fortune. The meer ſatisfaction of having honourably ſerved the public, is of more value, than every kind of recompence. We muſt put ourſelves in a ſituation to hope for every thing from heaven; this will prove the beſt ground of comfort, amidſt all the injuſtice of men.

I ſhould be very miſerable, if I thought you could only riſe, by means of intrigue. Shew on all occaſions a generous greatneſs of mind,

mind, which raiſes you above all the little artifices, and baſe compliances, which ambition ſtudies: habituate yourſelves to deſire no other advancement, than that which may ariſe from the performance of your duty; chuſe rather to live in obſcurity, than to ſhine with a borrowed luſtre: if we would be really honoured by the dignities conferred on us, we muſt never be aſhamed to declare, by what means we attained to them: true honour conſiſts not ſo much in obtaining promotion, as in having deſerved it. Thoſe titles, with which a man of faſhion is diſtinguiſhed, no longer afford him any real ſatisfaction, than while they are confirmed by the public approbation. CON. VIII.

CON. VIII.

IF you love the truth, as I truſt you always will, you will be utter ſtrangers to flattery and duplicity; but you muſt expect in return, that Fortune, who beſtows the chief of her favours on compliance and deceit, will not reckon you in the number of her favourites. You will then be great only in the way which is proper for you; true glory will never leave you; you will find, in yourſelves, thoſe honours and riches, which are not to be found in courts, and you will have this ſatisfaction, that neither injuries nor death itſelf will be able to take any thing from you.

IT is time for you, my children, to ſhew to the world an example of true magnanimity: the hearts of

too

too many are ſo debaſed, that they only think how they may arrive at honours, without concerning themſelves whether the means are generous and lawful. Envy, which always forms an atmoſphere round virtuous characters, will perhaps conſider you as proud; but what doth calumny avail, againſt a conſcience void of offence? It is then we wrap ourſelves up in our integrity, and are contented to defy malevolence. Whoever reſolutely devotes himſelf to the practice of virtue, will not fail to have enemies; ſo invariably is it the lot of real merit to be perſecuted, that it is laid down as an axiom, that it muſt be ſo. CON. VIII.

IT is not ſufficient to be poſſeſſed of military courage; you muſt have

CON. VIII. a ſtrength of mind, which extends itſelf to every part of your conduct; which raiſes you above all the rumours of malice and envy, which makes you deſpiſe reports and cabals, and which renders you invulnerable to the ſhafts of ingratitude and revenge.

Do not imagine that under the pretext of elevating your minds, I wiſh ſo to debaſe them, as to make you indifferent to every inſult which may be offered to you: all I have to ſay on ſo delicate a ſubject, is, that your own prudence muſt be your chief defence: by being affable and well-bred you will avoid thoſe dreadful rencounters, in which we know what we ought to do, but do not know, what we ſhall be compelled to do.

WHATEVER

WHATEVER may happen to you, CON. VIII.
never forget, that every ſubject owes his life to his King and country; and that you doubly owe your's, both as citizens and ſoldiers: you are appointed by the ſtate as centinels, to watch in its defence; the preſervation therefore of your own lives is a neceſſary part of your duty.

IF a trial muſt be made of your perſonal courage, war will furniſh you with abundant opportunities of ſhewing it. You never will be accuſed of want of bravery, whilſt you are ſeen the laſt in a retreat, and the foremoſt to engage; it is in ſuch ſituations, that a noble ambition ought to influence your conduct. When you have only deſires of this kind, virtue will ſecure them,

CON. VIII. and crown them with bleſſing and good ſucceſs.

THE duties of a ſoldier are the propereſt to excite emulation; they never want opportunities to diſtinguiſh themſelves. Even peace furniſhes them with means of exerciſing their faculties both of mind and body. It is then they make themſelves maſters of their profeſſion, and become accompliſhed through ſtudy and practice.

WHEN your rank requires you to make your appearance at court, you will not fail to attend there; not for the ſake of offering the incenſe of adulation to the great; nor to ſolicit more lucrative employments, but merely to form honourable connections with noblemen of the beſt character; and to

cheriſh in your hearts that reſpect- CON. VIII.
ful and filial love, which you owe to your King. Let merit alone ſpeak in your behalf, and leave it to thoſe who wiſh you well, to give it its proper weight. Your attendance at court will not then be irkſome to you; and courtiers will not look upon you with a jealous eye. As you will not have any pretenſions, you will have no inducement to act a part; and this ſimplicity and eaſe being ſomething uncommon, will perhaps more ſtrongly recommend you than diſſimulation. We had once an *Ambaſſador, who ſurprized thoſe of every other court, and obtained every thing he wanted, by always

* Colbert.

CON. VIII. ſpeaking the truth. Behold in him the perfect model of a worthy miniſter.

THE minds of men are ſo corrupt, that I ſhould not be at all ſurprized, if theſe hints for your future conduct were conſidered as romantic notions; but if you conſult truth and experience, you will think very differently of them: they will convince you, that it is not from the republick of *Plato*, that I derive theſe admonitions; and that you will never be truly happy, but when you reduce them into practice. Follow after virtue, make a grateful return for the love which I have ſhewn you; honour your mother, liſten to her inſtructions; and remember, that there are no people upon earth, with whom

whom the advice of a dying parent is not accounted as ſacred as an oracle. CON. VIII.

THIS conference made ſuch an impreſſion upon them, that they kept a profound ſilence, 'till their mother, whoſe very ſoul was filled with a tender anxiety for her children's happineſs, thus addreſſed them: Such, my dear children, are the truths of which your hearts muſt be the faithful depoſitaries, and which you muſt have continually before your eyes, as the moſt lively image of your father. I would to God he had ſurvived me; you would have found in the ſtrength of his underſtanding, and in the greatneſs of his ſentiments, every thing that is capable of improving and perfecting your own. But alas!

CON. VIII. alas! this is a vain wiſh: he is departed as a ſhadow; you have only had a father—to regret your loſs of him; and the hour is at hand, when you will have nothing left you but—— the remembrance of a mother.

CON-

CONFERENCE IX.

On GENEROSITY.

CON. IX.

I HAVE often thought that amidſt all the different modes of educating young people, they have never been ſufficiently inſtructed in the nature of true generoſity: to ſupply this defect, I intend to ſhew you, that there is nothing which raiſes us to a nearer reſemblance with the Deity, than the practice of this duty. We become imitators of that providence which diſpenſes its bounty with profuſion; and we reſemble thoſe beneficial clouds which diſtil plenty on every part of the earth.

THE

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THE ſpendthrift is as far from generoſity as the miſer: they are both of them beings, who have nothing in view but their own gratification, without any regard to the neceſſities of their neighbour. The one throws his money away, and the other locks it up; but miſery receives no conſolation from either. There is no virtue, where there is neither diſcretion, nor any regard for the public good: whatever has nothing better than vanity for its principle, is certainly far from being worthy of praiſe.

WHAT indeed would become of us, if our ſentiments were wholly under the influence of caprice? Nothing but folly and ſingularity would be found among men; and that attention to the public welfare, which

which ought to direct our ſentiments and conduct, would inſenſibly come to nought. It is the law of prudence and of reaſon which determines the uſe we ought to make of our talents and abilities; and it is only in following this law, that we advance towards perfection, and do honour to humanity. CON. IX.

RICHES are either an honour or a diſgrace to thoſe who poſſeſs them; it is a real misfortune to be rich, when we know not how to uſe our riches. I had infinitely rather leave you in a ſtate of indigence, than know, that you were either covetous or extravagant. Avarice renders us the objects of public indignation; prodigality carries us headlong into a thouſand difficulties. It is generoſity alone, which

CON. IX. which obſerves the happy medium betwixt both; which renders us worthy partakers of earthly and heavenly bleſſings; provided it is the work of the heart, and not the effect of humour or oſtentation.

WHAT delight does it afford one, to ſee a generous nobleman, who, giving every thing to beneficence and nothing to vanity, finds reſources in frugality, for the ſupply of the neceſſities of his friend, the aſſiſtance of an indigent widow, or the conſolation of the unfortunate? ſuch a ſight as this addreſſes itſelf to the heart; and with a power ten thouſand times more affecting than any theatrical repreſentation, awakens all the ſenſibility of the ſoul, and raiſes it above humanity itſelf.

EXHIBIT,

EXHIBIT, to the world, my dear children, ſuch a character as this; conſecrate a part of your income to the benefit of your diſtreſſed fellow-creatures; let your liberality extend itſelf, wherever the miſeries of others are urgent; adapt your bounty to the different degrees of wretchedneſs; and when circumſtances demand it, be generous to the utmoſt extent of your ability. CON. IX.

TRUE generoſity conſiſts in giving with propriety: the manner of diſpenſing, is oftentimes more pleaſing than the gift itſelf: a man who gives with an ungracious air, deſtroys all the merit of his benefaction: if you would oblige by your generoſity, you muſt ſhew the party whom you ſerve, that you think

CON. IX. think it more *bleſſed to give than to receive.* A liberal man ſets no value on gold, but as it enables him to relieve the neceſſitous.

I have often ſeen your father give large ſums of money to the truly diſtreſt; and perceived that he was more delighted with ſuch an act, than he could have been by any favour conferred upon himſelf. He felt, in his heart, that there is no ſatisfaction equal to the pleaſure of obliging others. Oh! if he were now inſtructing you in my ſtead, with what earneſtneſs of affection would he encourage you to adopt his ſentiments, and imitate his practice! How often hath the generous tear of pity fallen from his eyes, at the ſight of a miſerable object. Many a time has he led me

me to the habitations of the wretched, to teach me a proper regard for the poor, and to excite my deſire to comfort them: he ſought the company of ſuch as needed relief; he converſed freely with them as with brethren; he became a party in their ſufferings by a friendly ſympathy, and filled their hearts with conſolation and joy. CON. IX.

So bright an example muſt needs engage your reverence and imitation: you are under the ſtrongeſt obligations to ſhew thoſe perſons who have experienced the goodneſs of your father, that his virtues have deſcended to you, and that you are not degenerate; otherwiſe, you will only be deſpiſed, and will be conſidered as unworthy of that inheritance which he has left you.

CON. IX. You live in a age, wherein luxury dries up the ſource of liberality: that we may give full ſcope to our vanity, we have nothing left for the relief of miſery. We do not enquire, how much we can ſpare for acts of mercy, but what will enable us to gratify our paſſion for the moſt expenſive pleaſures? As for generoſity, it paſſes for a romantic virtue; and yet I will venture to aſſure you, that it is as eſſential to a man of quality as courage, and that it even makes a part of honeſty itſelf.

You will never be truly great, but ſo long as greatneſs is the principle of your actions. Every thing is little in a nobleman who is not generous: his ideas are little, his ſentiments are mean. The ſoul

grows

grows narrow and confined, when we are thinking only of œconomy; we muſt know how to ſpend, and how to give. CON. IX.

GENEROSITY is a virtue, which foreſees evil and endeavours to prevent it; which embraces every opportunity of doing good, and is awakened by the firſt complaint of the miſerable. Liſten only to her dictates, and you will liberally recompence thoſe who ſerve you; you will be ready to lend, and will know no greater ſatisfaction, than when you are relieving your neighbour. It is ſhocking to ſee men prefer ſo worthleſs a poſſeſſion as money before the life of their brother; or to ſee them make uſe of their riches only to feed their vanity and pride: I had rather your houſe were without furniture, and your wardrobe

CON. IX. without cloaths, than that you ſhould be inſenſible of the miſeries of the poor. But generoſity, which runs not to ſuch exceſs, but is duly mindful of meaſure and proportion, will ſuggeſt to you the means of reconciling what you owe to your rank, with what you owe to your neighbour; it will give order to your domeſtic affairs, and an air of greatneſs to all your actions; ſo as to enable you to be œconomical and magnificent on proper occaſions.

ABRIDGE yourſelves as much as poſſible of thoſe ſuperfluities, which the world eſteems faſhionable: to be the ſlave of vanity and folly argues a weak and puſillanimous ſpirit. A ſoldier is not allowed to be ſubject to thoſe trifles, which engroſs

engroſs the attention of a *Petit Maître*; nothing is more incompatible with the indulgencies of luxury and pride than a military life; nor does any thing better ſupport the dignity of that character, than a noble, unaffected external appearance. We often have recourſe to the world, only becauſe we eſteem what is faſhionable and ſpecious, in preference to what is really meritorious and praiſe worthy. CON. IX.

THE different maſters who have hitherto had the care of your education, have only taught you to read and ſpeak with propriety; they have inſtructed you in the elements of ſome of the ſciences; and enabled you to appear with an air of eaſe and elegance: but *my* buſineſs is to furniſh your minds with ſuch ſentiments

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as may render you worthy of the country in which you live; the reſt is no more than meer varniſh. When your ſouls are filled with the love of God, your King, and your country, and with a true ſenſe of your ſeveral duties, your character will be compleat, your conduct will be exemplary; you will then give every man his due, and live in ſuch a manner as to render virtue reſpectable.

THE generoſity which I recommend to you being that virtue which particularly belongs to people of quality, is not ſimply confined to lending or giving: it extends itſelf much farther, rendering the mind ſenſible of every thing that is intereſting to humanity. What indeed can be more truly great, more worthy

worthy of your illuſtrious birth, than to be touched with the ſight of other's miſeries? You will not only ſympathize with thoſe who ſuffer; but you will make every one about you happy: if you have a detachment to command, you will render the ſoldier's duty as eaſy to him as you can; you will liſten to his complaints; you will comfort him in his ſorrows; you will be his protector and his friend. Your father has often told me, that the great *Vendome* could have led his troops even into the midſt of the ſea; ſo warmly were they attached to their General. They were ready to ſacrifice themſelves for the ſake of a commander, who treated them with humanity, and who knew how to be good to his ſoldiers, without being familiar with them. CON. IX.

CON. IX. OF that multitude of young perſons who are ruined by extravagance, none are capable either of friendſhip or compaſſion: their life, which is a continual ſucceſſion of pleaſures, of debts, and embarraſſments, puts it out of their power to ſerve and oblige others. Their vanity and their paſſions demand all they have; and beſides what tends to the gratification of theſe, nothing more is to be expected. You will ſee the world filled with this ſort of people, who being diſtreſſed in the midſt of large *nominal* eſtates, enrich only thoſe who plunder them, or who lend them money at an extravagant intereſt: they inſult the wretched; they deſpiſe the common people; they make a jeſt of the public miſery; and pay attention

tion only to the inſtruments of their pleaſures, and the miniſters of their paſſions. CON. IX.

THESE are the men, with whom you muſt never be connected: the company of the wicked is truly peſtilential: we inſenſibly grow familiar with their vices, and we ſoon begin to imitate them. Engage virtue to find you true friends, and ſhe will procure them for you. There are yet generous minds to be found, whom the world has not corrupted; and who, knowing how to diſtinguiſh betwixt the demands of faſhion, and thoſe of right reaſon, would rather abridge themſelves, than leave the wretched without conſolation and relief. We cannot, to be ſure, aſſiſt all who ſuffer; but a well diſpoſed mind makes amends

CON. IX. mends for this inability, by thoſe expreſſions of pity and regret, which render its generoſity unqueſtionable.

IT only remains that I recommend it to you not to imitate the folly of thoſe miſtaken devotees, who, to make a greater ſhow with their alms, divide into a great number of ſmall portions, what is ſcarce ſufficient to relieve a twentieth part of thoſe among whom it is diſtributed. By confining your benefactions within a narrower compaſs, you will be enabled to do more real good; you may perhaps ſave ſome diſtreſſed families from ruin; whereas alms ſcattered here and there are like medicines which palliate, but never heal.

GIVE the reins to your natural diſpoſition, which has hitherto appeared excellent, and in the caſe of generoſity

generoſity I know no better guide. Fear not that you ſhall leſſen your fortune by aſſiſting the neceſſitous; we only ruin ourſelves by being vicious: Virtue keeps every one within proper bounds, who is attentive to her precepts. CON. IX.

WHAT *I* have neglected to do in this reſpect I charge *you* to ſupply; filial affection engages you to do it; and my love demands it of you in the moſt earneſt manner; as the means of enabling me to live even after my death. You cannot but ſee how nearly it approaches: my eyes are already grown dim; my voice is weakened; and nothing remains to me, but that ſpirit which a ſenſe of duty inſpires. I will keep it alive as much as poſſible, even to my lateſt moment, that I may omit nothing

CON. IX. nothing which can poſſibly improve your underſtanding, or exalt your ſentiments. As an equal ſhare of attention is due from me to all my children, I ſhall diſcourſe to-morrow evening with your ſiſter: ſhe is of an age to underſtand the language of reaſon; and ſhe is ſo apt to learn, that I have great cauſe to hope my advice will not be thrown away upon her.

I am obliged to ſummon together all the information I have ever received, that I may be the better enabled to furniſh you all with the means of conducting yourſelves aright. My heart is conſtantly filled with anxiety on your account; it urges, it conjures me to unfold to you all that it can think of, and all that it deſires to ſecure your happineſs.

WHAT

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WHAT a comfort will it be to me, if death ſhould leave me time fully to declare my ſentiments to you all! There is a wonderful difference betwixt the inſtructions which we receive from a maſter, and the advice which is delivered by the mouth of a mother, whoſe words are every one of them expreſſive of the tendereſt affection. Could you but know what paſſes in my mind every time I ſpeak to you! it appears, as if you actually reſided in my heart; and as tho' my blood, which can hardly any longer circulate through my veins, ſerved only to be employed for your ſupport.

NO: nothing can equal the tenderneſs of ſentiment, which your preſence excites in my heart: I have told

CON. IX. told you ſo a hundred times, and I ſhall tell you ſo again and again, even to my laſt breath. The more ardent our affection is, the more it delights to repeat its tenderneſs and tranſports. Alas! every thing conſpires to affect me whenever I behold you: I ſee your father in every line and feature: when you ſpeak, it is his voice I hear; in ſhort, I ſee my own heart repreſented in your's; and this aſſures me, that when I ſhall ceaſe to live, I ſhall be renewed in you: ah! diſmal moment of ſeparation both to you and me.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.